

TAKE A DIP IN A FLYING SUBMARINE

Stuff

WHAT'S NEXT



iPAD PRO TESTED

Literally our
biggest iPad
review ever

THE

MOST AMAZING THINGS
IN THE WORLD TODAY

OHH YEAH!

Super-priced speakers

Gadgets for dogs!

«LG's double down phone

Action figures!

Next-gen smartwatches



January 2016
Middle East Edition
A Motivate Publication

Dell recommends Windows.



It leaves room for everything except the competition.

Sure, being the world's smallest 13" laptop looks impressive, but its size is just the beginning. With the world's first virtually borderless infinity display, available with UltraSharp™ QHD+ resolution, configured using an Intel® Core™ i7 processor, Windows 8.1, up to 15 hours of battery life* and built with carbon fiber and machined aluminum, the new XPS 13 is amazing both inside and out. Which is great news for everybody — unless you're the competition.

The new Dell XPS 13. Better by any measure.



*Battery Life based on BrowsingBench test run by Dell in November, 2014. Visit www.eembc.org for more information. System had 150-nits (40%) brightness, WiFi on, 4GB memory, Intel® HD 5500 graphics, Intel® Core™ i5 processor, 128GB SSD and FHD display. Test results should be used only to compare one product to another and are not a guarantee you will get the same battery life, which may be significantly less than test results and varies depending on product configuration, software, usage, operating conditions, power management settings and other factors. Maximum battery life decreases with time and use. Dell XPS 13 is a trademark of Dell Inc. Intel, the Intel Logo, Intel Inside, Intel Core, and Core Inside are trademarks of Intel Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. Dell, the Dell logo and the Dell badge are trademarks of Dell Inc. ©2014 Dell Inc. All rights reserved.



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 David Ryan
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Partner Account Manager
 Luc Higham
Partner Account Manager
 Giuseppe Messina



Head Office
 Media One Tower,
 PO Box 2331, Dubai, UAE
 Tel +971 4 427 3000
 Fax +971 4 428 2270
Dubai Media City
 Office 508, 5th Floor
 Building 8, Dubai, UAE
 Tel +971 4 390 3550
 Fax +971 4 390 4845
Abu Dhabi
 PO Box 43072, UAE
 Tel +971 2 677 0124
 Fax +971 2 677 0124
London
 Ace House, 11/15 William Road
 London NW1 3ER, UK
 E-mail: motivateuk@motivate.ae



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WELCOME



It's a brand new year, and with it comes the inevitable rush of new technology, ever-ready to make our lives just that little bit easier. From internet-connected shoes to drone-assisted

dog walking (don't quote me on either of these), 2016 is poised to be another banner year for fans of things that bleep, bloop and are covered in brightly-lit AMOLED screens. For the time being, however, we're taking advantage of the annual pre-CES tech lull to reflect back on all of the 'awesome' that 2015 bestowed upon us. We've cooked up a massive cover feature (p25), collecting 100 things from the world of gadgets, apps, eagles, movies, games, robots and more into a giant mega-list of things that if you don't own them already, you're probably going to rush out and immediately acquire.

Not content to stop there, we've packed this issue with a host of reviews of the latest and greatest kit to hit gadget-land. From our in-depth look at Apple's enormous new iPad Pro (p43), to LG's selfie-tastic smartphone (p56), and a showdown between the latest generation of Android Wear watches (p50), there's enough to keep you busy until the reports from Las Vegas come flooding in. Oh, and did I mention we also sent one of our brave reporters 10,000 leagues – ok, it was more like 120m – under the sea in the world's most advanced personal submarine? Flip to p38 to find out if he survived. Spoiler alert: he's fine. Enjoy the mag.

Mike Priest, Editor / mike@motivate.ae / @MikePriest



THIS MONTH IN STUFF'S DIGITAL EDITION

- Expert digital reviews on all of the reviews inside this magazine
- All-new features and tests designed just for iPad
- Stunning hi-res photos of the hottest tech
- Spiritual fulfillment

WHAT'S HAPPENING ONLINE?

- Up to the minute news and views on everything from Apple to Adidas
- Exclusive video reviews, previews, trailers and gadget challenges
- More games! The latest titles reviewed in full, with in-game galleries and more

SONY

The world's best camera in a smartphone

Capture split-second moments with ultrafast autofocus
Tested against leading smartphones 2015

New
XPERIA Z5
Compact
XPERIA Z5
Dual
XPERIA Z5
Premium Dual



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Based on the Z5 main camera resolution (23MP), speed of autofocus and image quality assessment by 200 UK consumers of the top-selling smartphones of 2015. Specification verification and consumer testing carried out by Strategy Analytics. For more information, go to www.sonymobile.com/testresults/. Sony is a trademark or registered trademark of Sony Corporation. ©2015 Sony Mobile Communications Inc. All rights reserved. Network operator services not included.

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Your shopping could soon be 'droid-delivered



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Old sticks won't satisfy Rover any more – why should you have all the gadget fun?
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● Unlock your Canon DSLR's full potential
● Get better takeaways ● Employ a robot PA



WIN!
p23

TOP 10 OF EVERYTHING

Looking to buy something but need a bit of advice? Turn to our *Stuff* Top 10s: our expert listings of all gadgetry, from p64

SMARTPHONES



OnePlus X
★★★★★
Android envy
p64

TABLETS



Apple iPad Pro
★★★★★
Super-sized slab
p65

OUR PRICES
Prices in Hot *Stuff* are RRP's. Prices in features, tests and Top 10s are the best we could find from a reputable online retailer at the time of going to print.

H

O

T

S

T



HOT
FOUR
#1

THE FUTURE OF FORMULA 1

McLaren MP4-X

Despite (or perhaps because of) its struggling performance in 2015's Formula 1 series, McLaren has put a serious amount of future-gazing into this incredible concept. Lots of its features are already banned by the F1 authorities, and others quickly would be, but all would, naturally, also be awesome advancements for roadgoing vehicles.

For starters, body panels that can change shape. For aerodynamics, sure, but also to enable them to reform after an impact in case there's a secondary collision. Plasma flow technology electrifies the surface of panels to reduce drag – great for speed, but also economy... if the power needed to do it could be efficiently captured by solar panels. The driver, meanwhile, gets in-helmet augmented reality displays that effectively make the car invisible from the inside, as well as overlaid data on the surrounding cars in the race. McLaren finally gets carried away with talk of binning physical controls in favour of direct brain control, but nonetheless the MP4-X is a wonderful geek's dream.

As hot as... your Honda Civic, in 2025
US\$750k (concept) / mclaren.com

WATCH YOUR HEAD

A roof to protect the driver splits opinions in F1, but this is a high-tech solution. It tints in bright light, repels water and features a head-up display, both for the driver and for TV viewer cameras.



U

F

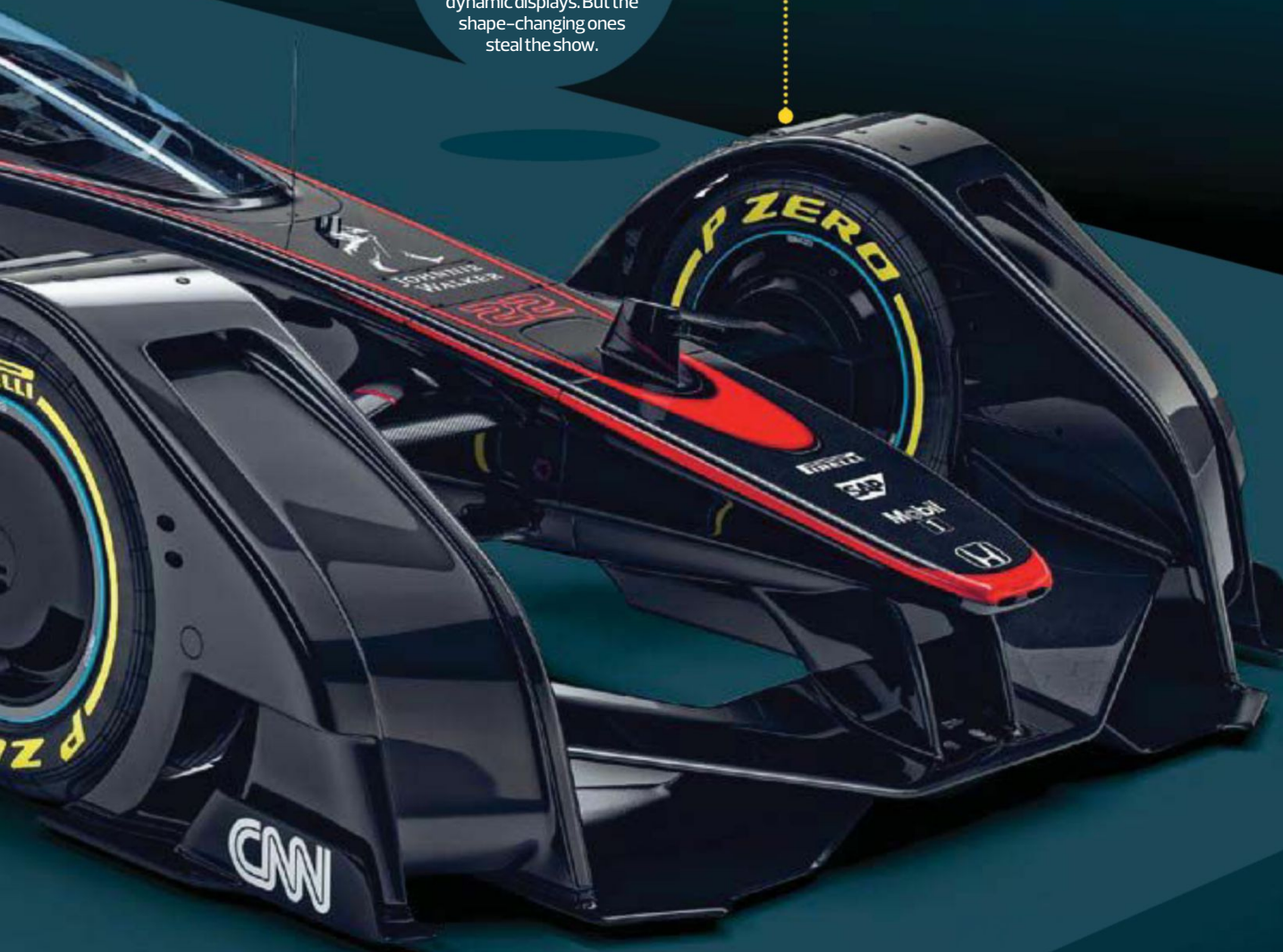
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15 PAGES
OF THE BIGGEST
STORIES FROM
PLANET TECH



PANEL SHOW

The MP4-X's body panels are multi-talented. Some have plasma flow technology to decrease drag, some are solar panels and some feature dynamic displays. But the shape-changing ones steal the show.



HOT
THREE
#2

THE PC THAT COSTS \$5

Raspberry Pi Zero

Even now, you might have enough loose change in your pocket to buy this computer. A computer! Something that used to fill an entire room, now in your pocket for the price of a box of Lindt Lindors. Although, unless you habitually carry around a lot of loose change, you might have to reach for your wallet to get the Linux-loaded SD card, USB power supply, microHDMI adaptor and HDMI cable needed to actually fire up this new mini Pi. (You might have some of that, but probably not in your pocket right now.) The size-zero Zero weighs just 9g, and measures 65x30mm. It is assembled in Wales with the same Broadcom processor as the original Pi, but now clocked to a healthy 1GHz and with 512MB RAM. It is just 5mm thick and has a flat bottom, which is smashing for building it into projects... though you might need to solder GPIO pins onto it if you're planning something proper geeky.

As hot as... **Wales's silicon valleys**
[US\\$5 / raspberrypi.org](http://US$5/raspberrypi.org)

PI'S THE DADDY

By the time you read this, Pi's unrivalled global community will have spawned countless Zero-based projects. But also check out other boards from Arduino, BeagleBone and Imagination's MIPS Creator.

TINY TOT

The Zero is designed for sneaking into the smallest of projects. But that also means you lose the normal Pi's video and Ethernet sockets, while HDMI and USB are micro size. Could be that a full-size Pi 2, for US\$35, would suit you better.

HOT
THREE
#3

RUNS LIKE BOLT, TRACKS LIKE MEARS

Withings Go

Eight months. There are many things you might do in that time. Many steps you might take, irreversible decisions you might make. But what you won't do is spend a single moment fustering about for the Withings Go's charger, or being cross at yourself for not charging it. Because its single CR2032 button battery is sufficient to power it for those eight months, despite its always-on E Ink screen that shows percentage goal completion, targets achieved or an analogue clock face. It can be wrist-worn or clipped and tracks walking, running and sleep, syncing data with the Withings Health Mate app (iOS or Android). It's also waterproof, sensing when you've hit the pool and tracking time and calories. And for not to unreasonable of a price either, this could be the fuss-free and frugal fitness device of 2016.

A shot as... one less charger by your bed
US\$70 / withings.com



GET IN THE SEA!

The Withings Go is water-rated to 5 ATM, which basically means swimming. It'll register that you've entered water, logging time and calories, but it doesn't have the stroke metrics of a triathlon tracker.



A GOOD DAY TO BUY HARD?

Panasonic Toughbook CF-20

US\$3100 / panasonic.com



The tablet part of the Toughbook detaches easily for mobile workers.

This battle-hardened convertible can easily suffer the slings and arrows of modern life.

● Float like a butterfly

A spillproof, rainproof, dustproof magnesium chassis with an integrated carrying handle... doesn't sound like the kind of thing you'd want to pop down to the coffee shop with, hmm? Well, prepare your Bear Grylls Surprise Face™, because the Panasonic Toughbook CF-20 weighs only 1.76kg all in. The display section, which can be entirely separated from the keyboard base to

become a Windows 10 tablet, is just 950g. It is kinda chunky: 16.4mm thick and 33.5mm with the base. But, big-top bonus: proper Ethernet and VGA ports!

● Sting like a bee

Hiding behind the 10.1in, 1920x1200, 10-finger touchscreen — with optional waterproof digitiser pen — is a 1.1GHz Intel Core vPro processor, with 8GB of RAM, a 256GB SSD drive and Windows 10 Pro. So 'sting like a bee' might be over-egging the CF-20's abilities. 'Relentlessly wander like a wildebeest' is pretty accurate, however, because both display unit and keyboard base unit have

hot-swappable batteries for up to 14 hours of typing stamina.

● Who's it for?

Soldiers, site managers and engineers. The kind who won't be worried about the high price as the company is paying. But if you can afford it, and if you can overlook the looks, the tough build makes it an incredibly useful bit of kit. Waterproof enough to survive the rowdiest family activity, it's jam-packed with connections, 4G, cameras, GPS and two (two!) card readers. You can use it as a laptop or tablet, or hang it from its handle. In a sea of effete MacBooks, this a rugged rebel headturner.

**IT'S JAM-
PACKED WITH
CONNECTIONS,
4G, CAMERAS,
GPS AND TWO
(TWO!) CARD
READERS**

SAMSUNG

360 Sound. All around you.

Advancing the art of technology with style, the new SAMSUNG Wireless Audio - 360 produces superior omnidirectional surround sound for discerning listeners. Surround yourself with the perfect sound experiences, everywhere at any time.

Wireless Audio - 360



R7



R6 Portable

WiFi | Multiroom App 2.0



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youtube.com/SamsungGulf

Available in all major electronic stores.



START MENU

The latest startups, crowdfunded projects and plain crazy ideas

KICK-STARTER

Is that a guitar in your pocket? **KURV GUITAR**

The reasons for not carrying an actual guitar around are manifold. Fragility. Cumbersomeness. The tendency for otherwise reserved people to demand you smash out a Billy Idol mastermix. The Kurv lets you carry your string skills more discreetly. In your left hand is the main Kurv unit with eight pressure-sensitive buttons. In your right is the motion and gesture-sensing Pick (a left-handed setup is also available). The two combine with an iOS app, upon which are preloaded 60 well-known songs to play along to, and some basic guitar theory. But the pair's output can also be used as a MIDI input for more serious software.

£150 / kurvguitar.com



BACK IT

STACK IT

SACK IT

KICK-STARTER

KICK-STARTER

KICK-STARTER

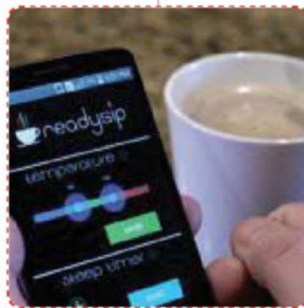
INDIE-GOGO



Paper fighters **POWERUP FPV**

"The first ever paper airplane drone with a live streaming camera" sounds like an exercise in trophy-bagging semantics. But it also sounds like a whole load of dangerous fun, with the pilot's navigation hampered by the cardboard VR headset. Buy several with your mates, take them to a quiet area of the park and dogfight.

US\$180 / poweruptoys.com



Hot in the sippy **READYSIP**

This is either going to make you squeal with delight at the joys of human invention, or howl in dismay at a display of wanton consumerism. Either way, it is a Bluetooth temperature probe for your hot drink, with LEDs predestined by the app to glow from red to green when your beverage is safe to sip. Ah, you went with howl. Us too.

US\$30 / readysip.com



Egged on (and off) **SMARTEGG**

This plucky little egg is capable of a great many functions, based around the premise of an app-based universal remote control. It has Unity database-powered infrared codes for over 5500 remote controls, with customisation, learning and macros. Functions can be triggered by your proximity, or by time.

US\$40 / aico.tech



Pi-powered light show **AMBISCREEN**

On the face of it – or rather, back of it – this is a way of retro-fitting Philips Ambilight-like LEDs to your TV so it glows to match the on-screen colours. But dig deeper and you discover that the control box is powered by a Raspberry Pi, so added Internet of Things geekery is available to motivated geek tweekers.

US\$200 / ambiscreen.tv



Big noise

TEUFEL BOOMSTER XL

'Bang for your buck' is too unsubtle a phrase to describe Teufel, a German audio brand that specialises in direct selling. But this XL version of its Boomster Bluetooth portable speaker being twice the price of the original suggests a very large bang indeed. An 80W amplifier drives twin 7cm midrange speakers plus a whopping 16cm downfiring subwoofer, with its battery able to sustain the resulting cacophony for eight hours. It has an FM radio built in, in case eight hours is more Bluetooth party time than your phone can handle.

US\$660 / teufelaudio.com

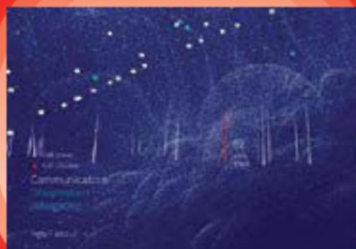


Just face it: you're regular

OAKLEY FLIGHT DECK XM

Do you know what they say about you when you're not listening? They say you have face. Before you decide whether to be annoyed, there's clarification: by 'face', they mean that you don't have a big face, or a tiny face. Oakley, the 'they' doing the saying, has produced this 'XM' version of its Flight Deck snow goggles, just for you and your medium face. It is available, as seen here, with the new Prizm lens tech that's optimised for colour, contrast and visibility.

US\$180 / oakley.com



↓ DROP EVERYTHING AND DOWNLOAD...

Architecture Of Radio US\$2.99 / iOS

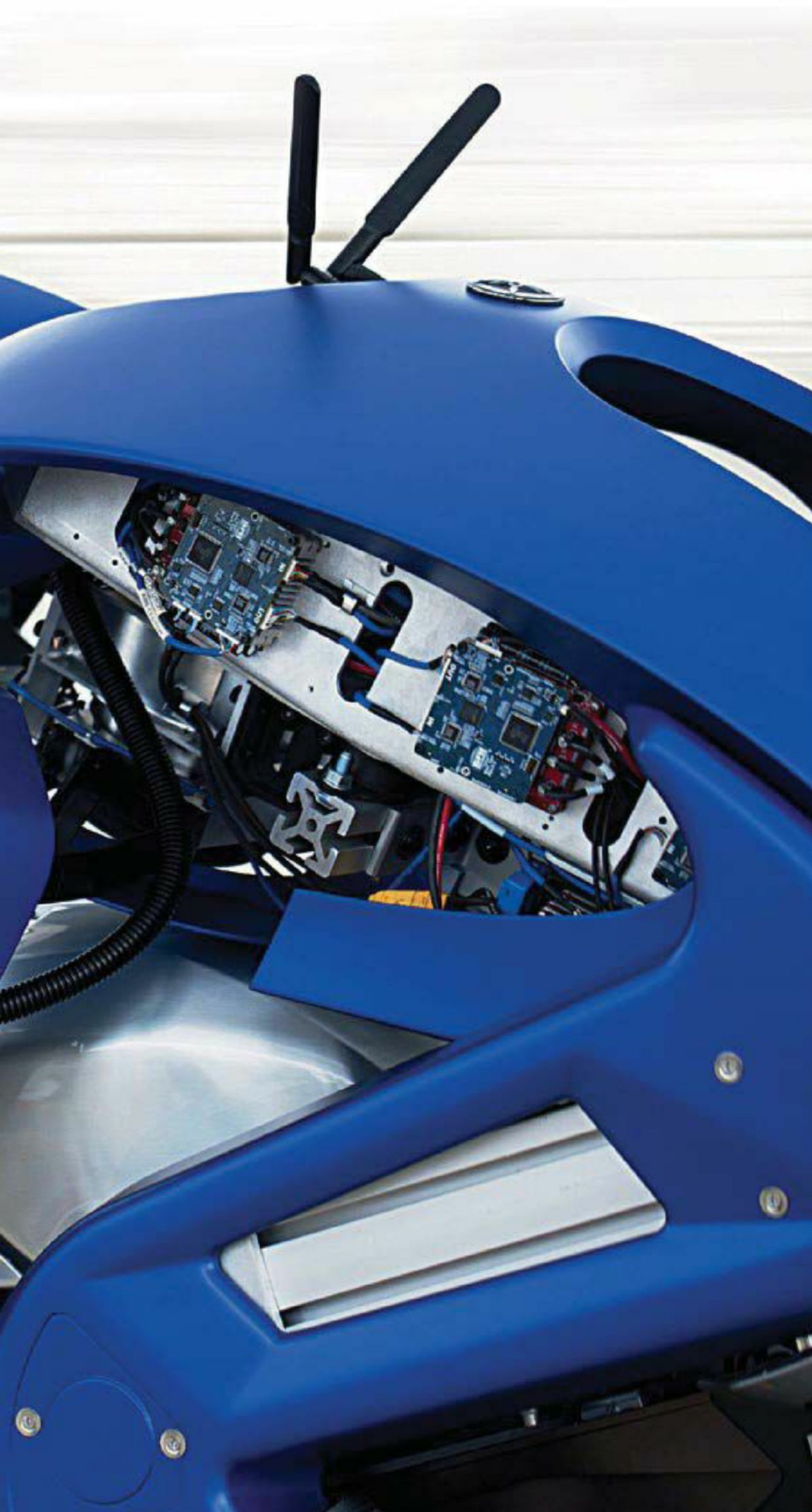
Despite its name, this is not an app that has diagrams of dissected radios. Instead, it grants you the most sought-after of superpowers: the ability to see radio waves. The app uses GPS along with a global database of the locations of nearly seven million mobile phone towers and 19 million routers, plus the hundreds of satellites in orbit. Hold up your iPad and it creates a whizzy visualisation of the waves in action around you. Not real, measured radio waves, then, but a fascinating visual study nonetheless.



ROBO ROSSI RELEGATOR

The response from the internet was immediate and astute: "No, Yamaha, don't invent a robot to ride motorcycles. Invent a robot to do my crummy job so I can ride motorcycles." But it's too late. The Japanese company has already put time and money into this riding robot, which uses conventional hand and foot controls to realise two aims: one, to develop rider safety and support systems; two, to eventually 'surpass' celebrity bike racer Valentino Rossi. Which is marketing, of course, but given Rossi just narrowly missed out on his 10th World Championship win, perhaps the cyber rider's alarming intentions had him spooked.





NEWS FEED



YOUR NEXT LAPTOP COULD RUN ANDROID

Google is reportedly looking at turning the Chrome OS it makes for all Chromebook laptops into a species of its Android phone OS. What does that mean? It means you could run all the apps and games from your phone on a light weight, US\$200-ish laptop.



YOUTUBE LAUNCHES RIVAL TO NETFLIX

Google has announced YouTube Red, a US\$10/m service that offers ad-free and offline viewing, exclusive videos and access to Google Music. It's US-only at the moment, but stop scrabbling for your passport: it'll be coming to the region at some point.



AI KNOWS WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER

Facebook's researchers are using artificial intelligence to scan, separate and identify elements in photographs. When it's deployed you'll be able to search for 'dog' and see all the dog photos you and your friends have taken, even if you've never tagged a dog. Creepy, but cool.



? WTF IS DRIFT TV?

Is it 24/7 screeching sideways car action?

Braap! Nope. But it is, in fact, somewhat related. Imagine it's Sunday night, and you've stayed up until the wee hours watching the latest Formula Drift round from Long Beach, California. High-octane car ballet! Rock music! Engines! Lights! Whooping commentary! And then you remember you've got a quarterly review in the morning, and so you guiltily scuttle off to bed. Can you sleep?

No, ma'am. Because my body may be at rest, but my mind is still racing.

Exactly. More than that, says Drift TV maker Saffron: the blue light emitted by modern screens messes with our archaic brains, making them think it's still daytime. Circadian rhythms, melatonin, eyes like golf balls – there's Harvard-branded science to back this up. So what do you do to get to sleep?

Nightcap and Nytol!

Oh, really? A fine, upstanding figure you'll present at that 9am appraisal. No, the solution to blue light overload is far simpler. Just stop watching TV, or using any screens, about three hours before a sensible bedtime. Have a bath. Read a book. Colour-code your sock drawer. Let the actual sun go down on your deserving self.

Ha! Good one. "Book".

Yeah, so the 21st century option is Drift TV (US\$100, seesaffron.com), which sits between your set-top box and your TV and, bowing to your preset timing demands, reduces the blue light levels of your TV picture as you approach bedtime. Slowly, so you probably won't even notice it happening. The brain – so complex, so easily fooled – reacts to this warming of the colours by dutifully running its own shutdown routine. Theoretically, whether you're watching screeching cars or screaming horror, you'll still sleep like a baby. (Without necking a pint of Calpol.)



App's well lazy

DE'LONGHI PRIMADONNA ELITE

Because even a US\$2200 coffee cooker won't walk over to your bed, this new De'Longhi bean machine has Bluetooth.

Fire up the Coffee Link app on your iOS or Android device and, after choosing your perfect combination of aroma, milk, coffee and temperature, you can set the process off without lifting a single decaffeinated limb. Your brews can be saved to one of six profiles, which can also be accessed on the Elite's colour LCD screen. But for that, and to drink your actual coffee, you will still have to walk over to it.

US\$2200 / delonghi.com



Crisscrossing your home with rope and cowbells is a low-tech, if time-consuming, alternative.

Xandem access memory

XANDEM

Xandem! Whisper it. But don't talk about it, because it could be the crafty burglar alarm of the future. It crisscrosses your space with invisible radio frequency beams, which can travel through walls and furniture. A hub analyses the nodes' signals and can show you the exact location of an unexpected visitor in the app. It can also trigger other cloud-connected systems, such as Philips Hue lights or Sonos speakers, so you could set it up to subject intruders to an impromptu disco so embarrassing they'll leave without nicking anything.

US\$495 / xandem.com

This month's mobile must-downloads

3 OF THE BEST

APPLE TV GAMES

ALTO'S ADVENTURE US\$2.99

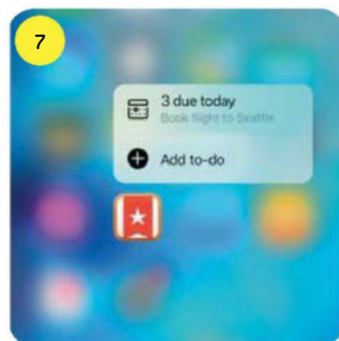
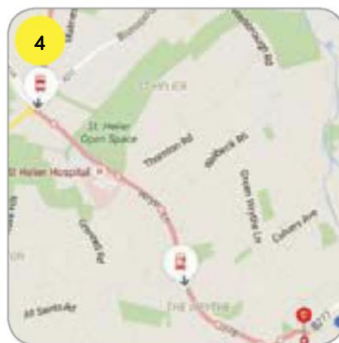
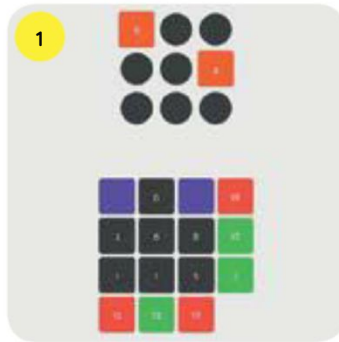
This is gorgeous on the big screen. As your little snowboard leaps over ravines, the weather and daylight subtly shift. Big scores require mastery of stunt combos and the ability to outrun angry elders.

BENEATH THE LIGHTHOUSE US\$2.99

Nitrome's arcade puzzler features a lighthouse with spiny rooms of spikes. You make circles on the touchpad to get a rotund chap from entrance to exit without being impaled.

CHILLAXIAN US\$1.99

This loving arcade tribute is more hypnotic than frenetic at first, as you swipe to blast away waves of dive-bombing aliens. But survive enough waves, and those aliens start learning new tricks.



1 Griddition

US\$free / Android

Flexing your mental maths muscle – by playing this grid-based, against-the-clock game – can have positive effects in real life: be a shrewder car-boot bargainer, or a more precise pick'n'mix measurer.

4 Citymapper

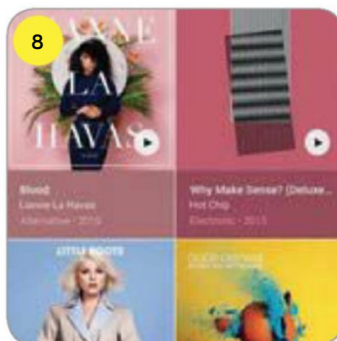
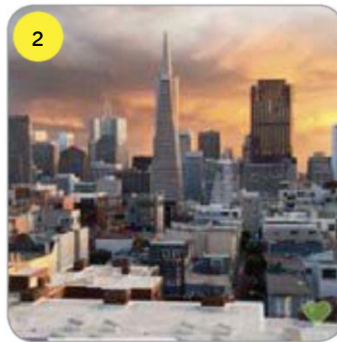
US\$free / Android, iOS

Still the best map app out there for travellers. More ace updates to Citymapper are worth mentioning: a new see-everything map mode, and live moving buses. Now were's the Middle East edition already?

7 Wunderlist

US\$free / iOS

We're not going to list any old app that's had a 3D Touch update, just like we don't go mad for Apple Watch updates, but the ability to long-press for an instant reminder makes this app way more usable.



2 Periscope

US\$free / iOS, Android

Big update for Periscope, in case you'd gone cold on it. (We had, a bit.) Video replays from the last 24 hours now show on the map alongside live broadcasts, while iPhone users get handy 3D Touch shortcuts.

5 Pro Pinball: Timeshock

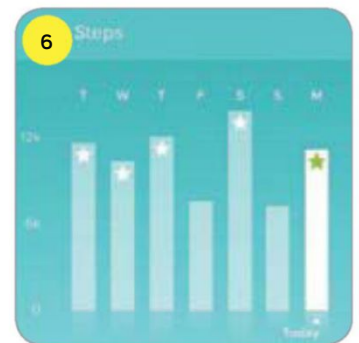
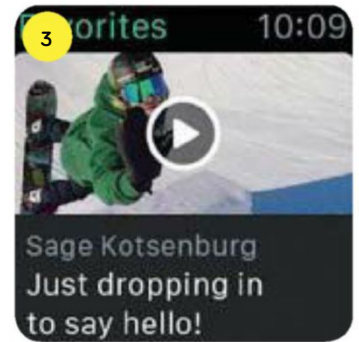
US\$2.99 / iOS, Android

It's been a finger-twitching wait, but the Android version of the Kickstarted reissue of *Pro Pinball* is here. The iOS version has had nowt but good reviews since early 2015, so this is a hot release.

8 Apple Music

US\$free / iOS, Android

In order to compete, Apple Music always had to be on Android, and here it is. It's a feature-rich transfer, with all of the same look and feel. Subscription still uses an Apple ID and costs US\$9.99 a month.



3 Vine

US\$free / iOS, Android, Windows Phone

We try not to mention any old Apple Watch app – and there haven't really been that many – but this one is surely worth a pop. You can now watch tiny Vine loops on a tiny screen on your tiny wrist.

6 Fitbit

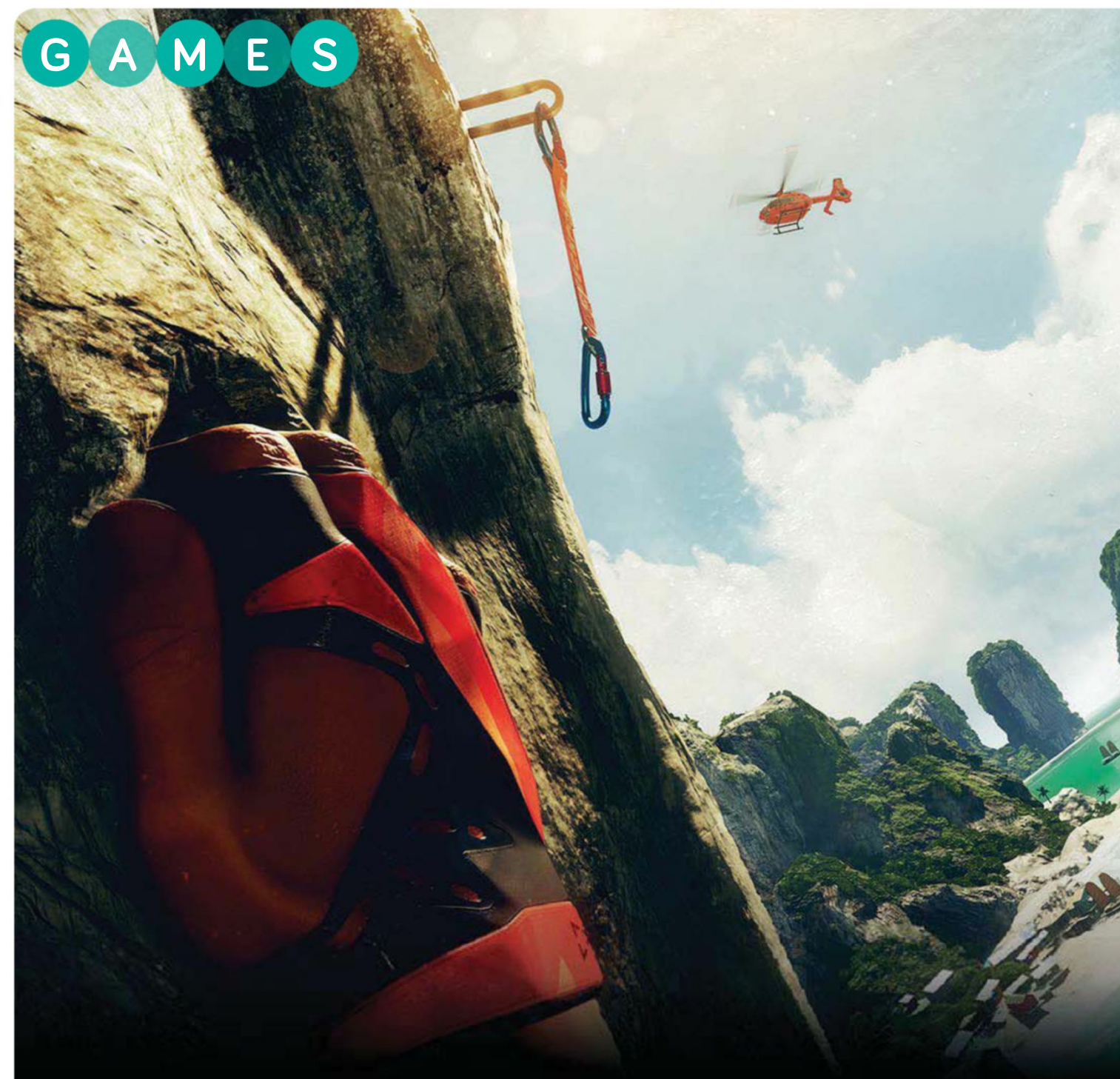
US\$free / iOS, Android

The Fitbit app gets weekly workout goals to encourage constructive effort. Meanwhile, conveniently, the Surge and Charge watches now recognise and log specific exercises: cycling, Zumba, kickboxing, etc.

9 Horizon Chase

US\$2.99 / iOS, Android

A love letter to classic 1990s arcade racers, *HC* is an intoxicating old-school blast through 73 tracks set in 32 cities. It's hard and it's fast, but its toe-tappy soundtrack and gorgeous visuals keep things fun.



FIRST PLAY THE CLIMB Oculus Rift

There are experiences that seem made for VR, and we can now add climbing to that list. Crytek's *The Climb* takes a really simple concept – climb from point A to point B – and makes it thrilling, because it just feels 'right'.

In the case of the demo level I played, the starting point was a wooden platform already a fairly long way up a cliff face in a beautiful, idealised version of Ha Long Bay in Vietnam.

You scan the rock face for handholds, which are often marked with chalk and prompt a gripping animation from the

disembodied hands floating in front of you.

Press triggers on the controller and the corresponding hand will grip the ledge you're looking at. Then it's just a case of finding the next handhold to make progress. Simple.

But that doesn't mean it's not challenging. Just finding the next hold can involve a vertigo-inducing lean.

And then there's the jumping. At one point I had to leap across a ravine, and as I looked down I couldn't help but ponder what Morpheus said about death in

The Matrix. I pressed both triggers and... fell to my doom. Thankfully, I reappeared at the last checkpoint. Falling is like getting an injection: terrifying, but over in an instant.

After many such falls I did get the hang of it, though, and before too long I'd reached the summit, relieved, exhausted and a bit sweaty: the game can't recreate the physical exertion of climbing, but the adrenaline is all present and correct. And the climbing action should be made even better by the Oculus Rift's Touch controller.



COMING TO CONSOLES

DIRT RALLY

PS4, Xbox One

F1 might think it has the world's best drivers, but you only have to watch someone guide a car doing 120kph down a road designed for sheep and tractors to appreciate just how Jedi-skilled rally drivers are.

Hardcore fans have already been tearing up the European countryside on PC but now *Dirt Rally* has left Steam's Early Access paddock and will drift on to consoles in April.

Rally isn't the stunt-obsessed arcade racer that used to carry the *Dirt* name; it's an off-road time-trial sim. The slightest error will see you in the scenery, so understanding how your chosen car handles and listening to your co-driver is vital.

And there's more to rally driving than just 'slow in, fast out' and 'mind that ditch'. Nailing each stage requires mastering techniques such as the Scandinavian flick, which slides you gracefully around corners.

With over 70 stages across six different rallies, from Swedish snow to hard Greek dirt, each surface will require a different driving style. If your only one is to accelerate first and worry about steering later, *Dirt Rally* probably isn't the game for you.



[Words: Tom Wiggins]

BEST PS2 GAMES TO PLAY ON YOUR PS4



GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

GTA III and *San Andreas* are also available but the high point of the series' PS2 period was easily *Vice City*, with its excellently realised recreation of Miami Beach in the '80s. The sheer size of *GTA V* has dated these games a little but *Vice City* is still a must-play of the wandering-around-causing-havoc-to-Africa-by-Toto genre.



TWISTED METAL: BLACK

With *Rocket League* the unexpected hit of the year, why not take a nostalgic road trip with this combat classic? *TMB*'s ghoulish take on a destruction derby will also let you take out the frustration of conceding a late goal in *Rocket League*. And who doesn't want to ride a tow truck with a massive spiked ball hanging off the back?



WAR OF THE MONSTERS

War Of The Monsters allows you to do two things: be a huge monster and smash up buildings. You can choose to take charge of a host of creatures including a giant ape, insect, eyeball and various robots, and fight against your fellow beasts – and if a building happens to get in the way... well, that's what insurance is for, right?



INCOMING

FEBRUARY

● XCOM 2

● FAR CRY PRIMAL

MARCH

● HITMAN

● UNCHARTED 4: A THIEF'S END

APRIL

● DARK SOULS 3

MAY

● BATTLEBORN

BANG & OLUFSEN BEOLAB 90

US\$40,000 / bang-olufsen.com

Those speakers are so disarmingly directionless.

Don't you think the Daleks would have been a lot more creepy if they didn't have an obvious front? If they were just a bobbly cylinder, from which death might emanate at any point? But knowing that humans have a basic need for things to have a front, the BBC's effects wizard gave the Daleks a snouty 'face' to relate to. It's the same reason that speaker

manufacturers, for eons, have been making speakers with an obvious direction: to alleviate nightmares. Although it might also be something to do with sound.

Probably. But that doesn't seem to have bothered B&O.

Very little bothers the king of Scandinavian audio. Especially in its 90th anniversary year, the culmination of which is this celebratory wants-for-nothing

BeoLab 90 digital uber-speaker. It weighs about as much as a motorbike and underneath that deliberately directionless design lie 18 speaker drivers, facing every which way but loose. Complex software measures the room that the speaker is in and adjusts the output to suit. You can also make use of 'beam width control' to adjust whether you want a traditional hi-fi audio sweet spot or all-encompassing party sound.

Ain't no-one doing no partying near my US\$40k speakers.

Speaker, singular. That price tag is 'per unit'. But there's a whole load of tech on board to justify its cost. As well as a huge amount of digital amplification, each speaker has RCA, XLR, USB and digital optical connections hidden behind one of the oak panels. High-res audio up to 24-bit/192kHz is supported, naturally. Might we suggest, as a kick-off, Orbital's *Doctor*?

THIS IS BANG & OLUFSEN'S
90TH BIRTHDAY
PRESENT TO ITSELF



LINCOLN
PRESENTS

Emirates AIRLINE 14th
DUBAI JAZZ
FESTIVAL

FOUNDED &
ORGANIZED BY



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YOUR MONTH JAN

December's deceased and with it the year; no worries, though, for January's here!



01

SHERLOCK: THE ABOMINABLE BRIDE

Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman return as the post-modern update to the classic Holmes and Watson archetypes. Except for this holiday special they're being transported back to turn of the century London for a not-so-classic murder mystery romp.



08

THE HATEFUL EIGHT

Three hours of Tarantino Western in which all the characters are bad guys and all are stuck indoors during a blizzard? Sounds like our kinda January. The music should be good, too, with legendary composer Ennio Morricone writing the score.



15

NOT TO DISAPPEAR

Daughter
After a flawless debut record, this ethereal London-based outfit have us chomping at the bit for their follow-up. If lead single 'Doing the Right Thing' is anything to go by, we expect great things indeed.



19

RUSSELL PETERS: ALMOST FAMOUS TOUR

Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai

The celebrated funny man returns to the Middle East with his risqué and hilarious brand of comedy. Tickets will sell out in minutes so get in quick if you want your sides to split.



25

LEGEND

Blu-ray, DVD

Dismissed by some as glorifying the antics of the Krays, *Legend* is nonetheless a riveting watch. Tom Hardy's dual role as both twins is remarkable, while the support from Christopher Eccleston, Emily Browning and Paul Bettany is strong.



29

LEGO MARVEL AVENGERS

All gaming formats
Take the figurative reins of your favourite Avenger in order to act out storylines from the various films. Unless any of them have actual reins. We've rather lost track.



WIN! A 4TB WD MY CLOUD MIRROR

Over the years you've amassed thousands of hours of movies, several weeks worth of music and an impossibly enormous collection of office staff party photos spread across multiple external hard disk drives of various capacity. Yes, just like the digital version of one of those reality TV shows where they name and shame an 80-year-old granny for not binning the daily newspaper since 1963. It's ok, we sympathize – in this modern age it's easy to hoard so much content and then promise yourself that you'll "definitely go back to it one day". Luckily, the boffins at WD have you covered. The WD My Cloud Mirror is what can only be described as a humanitarian effort to help you get to grips with your out of control addiction.

Firstly, a whopping 4 terabytes of storage space means you can finally consolidate all your content into one central location to better catalogue it and simultaneously help curb your OCD. You can also create backups of your data ensuring protection against rouge cups of spilled coffee. With all your favourite media in one place, My Cloud Mirror leaves you free to stream it to any tablet, smartphone, Smart TV, media player, gaming console or any other DLNA-certified device under the sun on, or outside of your local network. And unlike public cloud services such as Dropbox or Google Drive, My Cloud Mirror is completely free, meaning no monthly fees to have all your content in one safe, easy to access location.

We have one of these miracle devices to give away to a lucky reader. Yes, recovery is within reach.

HOW TO ENTER

For a chance to win a 4TB WD My Cloud Mirror go to **stuff.tv/me/win** and answer this simple question:

WHICH OF THESE IS NOT A SENSIBLE COLLECTION HOBBY?

- A Comic Books
- B Castles
- C Stamps

For more info visit wdc.com

Terms & conditions

All entries to be submitted by February 1, 2016. The prizes are as stated and no cash alternative is available. Prizes are non-transferable. The decision of Motivate Publishing is final and no correspondence will be entered into. For full terms and conditions see: www.stuff.tv/me/terms-and-conditions-me

HURRY!
COMPETITION
CLOSES ON
FEB 1

Alienware recommends Windows.

ALIENWARE 

THE FUTURE STARTS NOW.

New Alienware laptops with Intel® Core™ i7 processor are here to usher in the next era of mobile gaming. Get full-throttle action anywhere and truly intense at-home immersion.

Powerful performance for any device.

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NVIDIA GeForce GTX Graphics with a full HD 13.3" panel to provide unrivaled optic experience on the go.

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- 512GB SSD
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- 128GB SSD + 1TB 5400rpm
- 3GB NVIDIA GTX 970M GDDR5 Graphics
- 15.6" FHD
- 1 year next business day on-site warranty

AED 8999

ALIENWARE 17

Go big and game big on our most powerful laptop with Intel® Core™ i7 processor and a 17" FHD screen.

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- 17.3" FHD
- 1 year next business day on-site warranty

AED 10999

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Why?
BECAUSE
WE SAY
SO THAT'S
WHY

STUFF 100 THE MOST AMAZING THINGS IN THE WORLD TODAY

GADGET-
PACKED
4X4
p20

3D
SCANNING
DESKTOP
p28

FROM THE **TECHIEST CARS** THE WORLD HAS EVER
SEEN, TO THE PLANET'S MOST BLEEDING-EDGE
GADGETS AND THE HOW-DO-THEY-DO-THAT **APPS**
THEY RUN, NOT FORGETTING THE GREATEST GAMES,
PLACES, **FILMS** AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN...

IN-PHONE
MURDER
MYSTERY
p31

GROWING
SPUDS ON
MARS
p34

[Photography Pete Gardner]

GETTING ARTY WITH WATER



SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES

It seems we're finally ready to go driverless: prototypes of the Google Self-Driving Car and the Freightliner Inspiration autonomous truck are already out on American roads. Taking human error out of driving may be kind of unsexy, but it'll save a LOT of lives. google.com/selfdrivingcar



DOT BRAILLE SMARTWATCH

The Dot is a potential life-changer: a smartwatch that displays physical Braille dots, so the visually impaired can read notifications and texts. Yes, in the future, blind people will be able to waste just as much time on Facebook as everyone else. fingerson.strikingly.com



REVERSE GRAFFITI

This technique (aka 'clean tagging' and 'grime writing') has seen artists like Paul 'Moose' Curtis create huge murals by doing nothing more than blasting dirt from public landmarks with a jet wash. Naturally, tech companies like Microsoft and Nissan have started using it for guerrilla marketing.



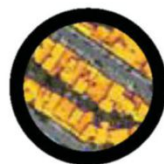
OPEN BIONICS

There are over 10 million amputees worldwide, but good prosthetic limbs cost tens of thousands of dollars. Using 3D printing, Open Bionics is creating light, strong, personally tailored robotic hands at a tiny fraction of the price. If there's a better use of robotics, we've yet to see it. openbionics.com



EX MACHINA

Alex Garland's dystopian tale of a humanoid AI's attempts to pass a Turing test ticks off countless items on the sci-fi checklist but never becomes predictable or drifts into lazy cliché. In fact, Ava (Alicia Vikander) is so convincing as the robot, you'll probably start questioning her humanity yourself. exmachina-movie.com



GOOGLE PROJECT SUNROOF

Using an astonishing combination of data (including 3D modelling of your roof and historical cloud patterns), this project can tell you exactly how much you'll save by installing solar panels on your roof. It's US-only for now, but has worldwide ambitions. google.com/get/sunroof

STUFF THAT'S CLEVER



USB-C

It's super-fast and supports charging. But the big USP? It's reversible!

GOOGLE PHOTOS

This app sorts your pictures into different categories in the cloud. Don't ask how. It's magic.

BE MY EYES

An ingenious iOS app that pairs visually impaired users with volunteers over a live video chat.

TOMTOM BANDIT

This action camera automatically generates a rough highlights edit ready to show off to the world.

SWINCAR (swincar.fr)

Four wheels fixed on articulating 'arms' can handle practically any terrain and keep you upright.

DOLBY ATMOS

A full speaker array means sound emerges from all over the cinema. Also available for your living room.



LAPIERRE E: SHOCK AUTO

Twenty years of tweekery have enabled full-suspension mountain bikes to climb and descend with equal poise and minimal effort. The E: Shock Auto system adds accelerators and actuators that open or close the suspension based on the terrain. [US\\$4300 / lapierre-bikes.co.uk](http://US$4300/lapierre-bikes.co.uk)



SPOTIFY DISCOVER WEEKLY

Spotify's Discover Weekly playlist is like having a mate make you a mixtape every Monday morning, but with your friend not only knowing pretty much every song ever recorded, but having them in his record collection ready to share. He's got pretty good taste, too. play.spotify.com



VOLVO LIFEPAINT

This is surely something of a must-have for cyclists – a transparent spray that turns almost any material into a bright reflective surface when car lights bounce off it. If you can resist spraying rude words on your neighbours' cars, the practical applications could be life-saving. volvolifepaint.com



SAMSUNG GALAXY S6 EDGE

Samsung has finally forged its magnum opus in the form of the Galaxy S6 Edge. Clad in metal and glass, it feels as premium as its pricetag would suggest, and that's before we even get to the star of the show – its sexy double-curved screen. It stands out from the crowd of black rectangular slabs. [US\\$840 / samsung.com](http://US$840/samsung.com)



SOUND OF POWER ST VLADIMIR

Fortunately for the future of the planet there's only one Vladimir Putin (although don't bet against him building a clone army), but Sound Of Power has made 100 of its Vlad-shaped speakers to make up for it. Who knows how good it sounds, but it's certainly a talking point at dinner.

sound-of-power.com



JAGUAR F-TYPE COUPE

Jaguar's F-Type Coupe isn't electric, it doesn't drive itself and it can't fly (although it's so fast it sometimes feels like it could), but of all the cars we've driven in the past year, there's something about the F-Type that's impossible to shake off.

If only it was the price tag.
from US\$76,230 / jaguar.com

PURRS
LIKE A
260KPH
KITTEN



IMOGEN HEAP'S MI.MU GLOVES

They look like a gimmick until you see them in action, when you realise the gloves are an intrinsic part of Heap's live performance. Gestural controls give her intuitive command over playback and effects. Freeing the artist from hardware, Mi.Mu breaks down barriers between musician and machine.



B&O MOMENT

It sounds more like a new low-fat chocolate bar than a high-end hi-fi, but try to bite off a section of B&O's chunky Moment and you'll be shelling out the cost of another one (a not insignificant \$2795) for dental fees. Still, at least you'll have a nice streamer to distract you from the pain.

US\$2795 / bang-olufsen.com



THE RETURN OF THE TECHNICS TURNTABLE

Technics' first turntable since its 1210 is a DJ second coming.

TC TONEPRINT

The TonePrint phone app sends new effects into a stompbox as a coded audio signal via a nearby guitar pickup. Absurdly, it works.

AKG 451

We loved these on-ear cans at over US\$100 now they're US\$50.

GARAGEBAND

A '90s producer would be left in tears of terror by the power of this free digital workstation.

ISIS KARAOKE (@isis_karaoke)

Beat extremism with laughter, using this Twitter account.

PRO-JECT ESSENTIAL II DIGITAL

Old-school record deck, nu-skool 24-bit digital optical output.

STUFF THAT SOUNDS GOOD



NAIM MU-SO

The Naim Mu-so is quite clearly very cool, even if you've no idea what it actually does. But as you've asked, it's an all-in-one music system that combines all of Naim's many decades of hi-fi experience with the latest in streaming. It'll play anything, from Spotify to hi-res studio masters.

US\$1300 / naimaudio.com



DICE

"No booking fees" sounds good, doesn't it? Almost as good as "free cookies" or "drinks on us". Dice can't help you with the free food and bevies, but the ticketless gig tickets it sells on its app have nothing added on top; plus, because they're trapped inside your phone, they're pretty much impossible to tout.

US\$ / iOS, Android



TEACHING SIRI YOUR NAME

Siri already knows your name but there's more fun to be had teaching it a different one. Perhaps you've always wanted to be known as The Archbishop of Banterbury but your parents wouldn't let you change it as a child. Just tell Siri what you'd rather be called and stage one of your transformation is complete.



HOW MUSIC GOT FREE BY STEPHEN WITT

You wouldn't think codec chat would make for a thrilling read, but Witt's book about how we went from CDs to MPfreebies, largely thanks to one bloke, is illuminating and nostalgic in equal measure, particularly if you know your AAC from your OGG Vorbis.

US\$17 / amazon.com



SONOS

It's 2015 and wires should be extinct. Sonos's elegant wireless speakers spread across the house, letting you throw the teenage house party of your dreams with only your phone to DJ from. They look good, they sound good and they network so easily that you can add to your collection when funds allow.

from US\$200 / sonos.com



YAMAHA R-N602

Old-fashioned '70s-style hi-fi meets new-fashioned music streaming in this amp, which combines big, satisfying switches and aluminium so coarsely brushed you could file your nails on it, with MusicCast tech allowing you to play through any source that's connected.

US\$600 / yamaha.com

THE GIFT
THAT
KEEPS ON
GIFING



TECHNOLOGY WILL SAVE US

The tech you can make is not as advanced as the tech you can buy. Such is life. But the tech you make gives you a better understanding of the tech you buy: how to use it, how to fix it, how to avoid buying what we in the techosphere like to call an 'Amazon Fire Phone'. techwillsaveus.com



ZURI 01

The best thing most people ever make out of a sheet of A4 is a feeble paper aeroplane, but Hamburg's Zoobotics have raised the bar so high you'd need a telescope to see it. Its Zuri 01 kit comes with everything you need to build a 'bot, which includes nothing more than paper and cardboard for the body. zoobotics.de



FORMLABS FORM 1+

The 3D printing dream is a miniature production line in the cupboard under the stairs. The 3D printing reality is usually slow and disappointing. Not so with Formlabs' Form 1+, speedily and consistently churning out stuff that's so detailed it looks even better than the machine itself. [US\\$3500 / formlabs.com](http://US$3500 / formlabs.com)



HP SPROUT

HP's bonkers all-in-one feels more like a Thing From The Future. Why? Not because it's more powerful or has a better display or anything like that, but because it acts as a bridge between the physical and the digital worlds. The Sprout will scan it into itself as a 3D model. Reshape, resize and rethink, then send it to your 3D printer. [US\\$1900 / hp.com](http://US$1900 / hp.com)



GIPHY CAM

As the human race descends into a sub-species that communicates exclusively in emojis and GIFs, Giphy Cam is your new mouthpiece. It makes creating a GIF as easy as shooting a quick video, and you can garnish it with all kinds of meme-worthy graphics and effects for added lolz. [US\\$free / iOS](http://US$free / iOS)



THIS HOMEMADE CONTROL PANEL

This is how any self-respecting geek should be controlling their computer from now on. With over 100 programmable buttons and switches (plus sound effects) it's the stuff geek dreams are made of (mainly LEDs, Arduinos and USB controllers). bit.ly/computer_control_panel

STUFF TO MAKE



PROJECT ARA

Building your own phone is a bad idea, unless it's Google's amazing clicky-magnet futuro-device.

ARNOLDC

This programming language replaces common commands with Schwarzenegger one-liners.

BLURB

The best service we've used for turning digital photos into a hardback book of memories.

LEGO FERRARI F40

This costs considerably less than a full-size one, and is significantly easier to place on an office shelf.

100 PAPER PLANES TO FOLD & FLY (amazon.com)

The most satisfying way to fly without shelling out for a ticket.

PORTABLE R2-D2 PS4

We'd punch an ewok in the face to own one of these consoles. Seriously, bring us an ewok.



RASPBERRY PI 2

Yes, you can build a NAS, a media player, a stratosphere-penetrating robot balloon or ocean-navigating vessel with a \$35 Raspberry Pi 2. Or you can simply enjoy the fact that you've got a Windows 10-running mini-PC for less than the cost of that last round of drinks. [US\\$35 / raspberrypi.org](http://US$35 / raspberrypi.org)



IKEA WIRELESS CHARGING FURNITURE

Where we're going, we don't want wires. Ikea has the right idea, building wireless charging points into some of its new furniture: bedside tables and lamps that can re-juice your phone with a simple touch. And they actually look quite nice, which is a bonus. [from US\\$50 / ikea.com](http://from US$50 / ikea.com)



NUTRIBULLET

The very latest must-have for faddy foodies, Nutribullet pulverises fruit and veg into a smoothie — even the stems, seeds and gnarly bits you usually chuck out. Yes, it's a blender. But it uses 'bullet cyclonic action', making it super-quick, and it's a doddle to clean. [US\\$120 / buy nutribullet.com](http://US$120 / buy nutribullet.com)



3DOODLER 2

Definitely not for meetings, otherwise they're going to see your boredom turn into a 3D sculpture. Regardless of how pretty that bicycle or pizza you've made is, they're not going to be happy. But for arty types, this is like having a 3D printer in your palm. [US\\$100 / the3doodler.com](http://US$100 / the3doodler.com)

FANCY
FLATPACK
PHONE
FUELLING

ONE-
THUMB
SNOWY
FUN**DOUBLE
NEGATIVE**

From the black hole in *Interstellar* to *Ex Machina*'s creepily realistic AI android Ava, if there's a scene in a film that's made you go 'wow' recently, it's probably down to Dneg. *Interstellar*'s black hole was so convincing there was an article published about it in the *American Journal Of Physics*. dneg.com

**ALTO'S
ADVENTURE**

We've played loads of one-thumb leapy games, but none have as much style as *Alto's*. Dynamic weather and lighting make it a visual feast, and the fluid movement turns the simple idea of bombing down mountains doing backflips into some genuinely satisfying gameplay. **US\$0.99 / altosadventure.com**

**OLYMPUS
OM-D E-M10
MARK II**

Cameras are Goldilocks gadgets: to get a lot of good pictures you want something with a big sensor but a small body, a solid build but a throw-in-a-bag price, a host of controls but also speed and simplicity. The new E-M10 is, in all these ways, just right. **US\$700 / olympus.com**

**APPLE MACBOOK**

To be honest, the MacBook isn't the best laptop Apple makes – that would be the 13in Pro. It's actually possible to buy two very good Windows 10 devices for its \$1300 asking price. But this ultra-thin 12in machine, with its luscious screen and haptic touchpad, is also the laptop we want the most. **US\$1300 / apple.com**

**EARTH VIEW**

As brilliant as Google Earth is, a lot of the planet is really quite boring to look at. Al Ain, for example. Or most of Belgium. Earth View cuts all those bits out and just shows you a collection of the most peeper-pleasing chunks of landscape out there. And all without leaving your desk. **earthview.withgoogle.com**

**GOOGLE
CHROME-
BOOK PIXEL**

The new Chromebook Pixel only runs a single web browser. Just because this laptop has a screen with 4.3m pixels, a 12hr battery life, USB-C charging and a svelte aluminium body doesn't mean you have to go and buy it. But it might be an idea. **US\$1000 / google.com/chrome**

STUFF THAT LOOKS NICE**VOLVO XC90**

A big SUV may look like an odd choice for the likes of *Stuff*, but the XC90 is a seriously techie motor. We particularly like the T8 version, which has an extremely clever, fast and efficient hybrid engine, and all models come with a super-smart, tablet-like infotainment system. **from US\$68,000 / volvocars.com**

**DEVIALET
PHANTOM**

If you think B&W's T7 is expensive for a Bluetooth speaker, it might be best to look away now. The Phantom might cost more than a small car but it is also almost as powerful as one, with 3000 Watts inside the Silver version. Oh, and it looks like some sort of futuristic escape pod. **US\$2000 / devialet.com**

**YAMAHA
XJR1300**

In theory, the XJR1300 is nothing special. It's not the fastest, it's not the lightest and it doesn't have any particular tech on board to make it pull a wheelie every time you wiggle your ears. But really, just look at it. Wouldn't you love to have that little beauty sitting on your drive? **US\$12,800 / yamaha-motor.eu**

**OOPS I DROPPED
THE BULB**

"Oops, I did it again / I made you believe / In a light that pretends (to be bro-oh-ken) / Oops, I 3D-printed it again / Because that's how 3D printing works." Yeah, sing it, Britney. This clever lamp, which encloses an (unbroken) LED bulb, is one of a series of smashing lights by Swedish designers Gassling. **US\$440 / gassling.com**

IS IT ART
OR JUST
A LAMP?**MOTO 360**

The original Moto 360 was Android Wear's high watermark for some time, but with its improved processor and a dollop of extra RAM, we like the new version even more – plus it'll now work with iOS, so you can mix and match your phone to your wearable. And you can't do that with an Apple Watch. **US\$300 / motorola.com**

**LG 55EG960T**

4K's brilliant! OLED's brilliant! What a surprise, then, that 4K OLED is mega-brilliant! This is the first telly to bring the two technologies together, and the result is a pin-sharp picture that combines the deepest blacks with the whitest whites in a fashion that only outer space can match. **US\$4000 / lg.com**

GOOGLE DEEP DREAM

Google doesn't just use artificial intelligence to drive its cars or have a guess at what you're going to search for next — it's also been teaching the machines how to see and interpret the world. Deep Dream is designed to show how they do this, with the machines looking at images for things they've

seen before and inserting them into the image. The idea is that they'll eventually be able to understand what's in any scene just by looking at it, but what they've got so far is more like peering inside the brain of a computer on a heroic amount of drugs. Still, it makes for some awesome images like this one.

NEW INSTA FILTER

Dreamify for Android runs your phone pics through the Deep Dream machine and turns them into the stuff of robo-nightmares.

STUFF THAT LOOKS NICE



ADOBE LIGHTROOM

The photographer's best friend, whether you're selling snaps for thousands or an enthusiastic amateur using the presets and plug-ins to farm a few 'likes'.

EVERY FRAME A PAINTING

Being a director isn't just about causing Bayhem. This YouTube channel has insights into the visual tricks used by the best.

SONY ALPHA A7 II

It has taken three decades of continuous refinement, but the A7 II is small, light and, thanks to its huge full-frame sensor, capable of astonishing pictures.

SONY ULTRA SHORT THROW PROJECTOR

The problem with 147in 4K TVs is they don't exist. This real box can sit at the base of a wall and project 147in 4K video onto it.



APPLE IPAD AIR 2

That Apple chose not to refresh the iPad Air 2 last year speaks volumes about just how good its flagship tablet is. Pitched at the perfect midpoint between the new Pro and Mini 4, the Air 2 is an ideal device for multitaskers — as good for YouTube as it is for Office docs on the go. **from US\$500 / apple.com**



SANTA CRUZ STAR WARS COLLECTION

With packaging made to look like vintage toy boxes and designs depicting the brush with the Sarlacc Pit in *Return Of The Jedi*, you'll need some pretty serious mind tricks to convince somebody these are not the decks they're looking for. **from US\$60 / santacruzskateboards.com**



MOTOROLA MOTO X STYLE

Every phone you can buy is made from pretty much the same components, collected together in a shell and given a bit of software. With most running similar software, the biggest difference is the shell, and the X Style's design is fully customisable using Moto Maker. **US\$400 / motorola.com**



THE CLOUD

There are two ways to enjoy a thunderstorm in your lounge. You could take off the roof and wait for some inclement weather, or buy this Arduino-controlled, motion-activated ministorm, which rumbles, flashes and plays music in your front room, all without invalidating your insurance. **from US\$580 / richardclarkson.com**

30 TIMES
BIGGER
THAN THE
LAST ONE

STAR WARS BATTLE- FRONT

A fantastic new *Star Wars* movie finally banished the painful memory of Jar Jar Binks, and with *Battlefront* making a strong showing on the gaming front there's never been a better time to put 'Jedi' on your census form. Yes, the force is strong with this one.

starwars.ea.com



FIFA 16

Without a copy of *FIFA* and a PS4, lunchtimes at *Stuff* HQ would be tedious, lifeless affairs. Instead we experience the highs and lows only football can bring, thanks to a highly organised league (complete with a seeding system based on *FIFA* world rankings). Step aside, Blatter – we've got this covered.

easports.com



ROCKET LEAGUE

As competitive as the *Super Mario Kart* World Championships and more addictive than popcorn-flavoured bubblewrap, this football-in-cars funfest has been the surprise hit of 2015, eating up way too much of *Stuff*'s time. So forgive us the odd typo this month, eh?

rocketleague.psyonix.com



THE WITCHER 3: WILD HUNT

We love big games. Not big in a million-selling way, but big as in 'warning – may eat up hundreds of hours of your life'. Well, *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* is HUGE. Some of its side quests are longer than most full games and you could spend hours just playing the amazing *Gwent* card game within it.

thewitcher.com



HER STORY

Fans of monochrome Danish crime dramas will love *Her Story*, an interactive game featuring murder, intrigue and a search engine. To complete it you must uncover archived interview clips of suspect Hannah Smith. The order you watch them in will affect your entire view on this sordid tale.

herstorygame.com



FOOTBALL MANAGER CLASSIC

If you'd told us 10 years ago that one day we'd be able to carry around rectangles that let us play *Football Manager* anywhere, we'd have attempted to destroy it in the interests of saving humanity. Honestly, it's a wonder anybody gets any work done at all.

footballmanager.com

STUFF TO PLAY



WARHAMMER QUEST

Gone are the Saturdays when you could go to Games Workshop and spend an hour choosing a new 12-sided die. Your Ork & Eldar Paint Set is in the loft somewhere. But it's not all bad – you can still beat up a Snotling or stab a Skaven in the dungeons of this fiendishly addictive point-'n'-wizard.

rodeogames.co.uk



DOOM

The godfather of all first-person shooters will make you a next-gen offer you can't refuse when it returns this year. The kids might be more interested in yet another *Gunbloke 2000* game, but gamers of a certain age know that *Doom* deserves some space on your fragging schedule.

doom.com

ALIENWARE STEAM MACHINE AND STEAM CONTROLLER

Your hand contains 29 bones, 123 ligaments, 34 muscles and 48 nerves. To this hugely sophisticated instrument, a standard gamepad is an insult. The Steam Controller redresses that balance somewhat with clever haptic touchpads that offer more precise control. You get four buttons, a stick and triggers that will make sense to any gamer's hands, but there are more buttons in the back to click with a kind of whole-hand squeeze. It's clever, but not so clever that you can't learn to use it in a few minutes... and it could revolutionise the way we play.

store.steampowered.com



FALLOUT 4

In *Fallout 4* you emerge from a nuclear bunker after 200 years to find a post-apocalyptic wasteland where Boston used to be – and something not entirely dissimilar is likely to happen to you once you get engrossed in Bethesda's latest action RPG. No problem, just don't forget to eat every now and then.

fallout4.com



STAR WARS X-WING MINIATURES GAME

Having reached peak *Star Wars* in all other consumable media, it's only natural that we'd like to bust it out on the table-top. This strategic miniatures game lets you pilot your favourite starfighters from the films and the (now defunct) expanded universe.

Pew-pew.

US\$40 /

fantasyflightgames.com

Workers have removed stones from 21.5 million square metres of South African desert, by hand, for the Bloodhound's record-breaking run.

FAST & FURIOUS



BLOODHOUND SSC

With 25,000 more horsepower than the QE2 but the carbon footprint of just 4.1 lactating cows, you might expect the Bloodhound to look more like a barn on wheels, with an exhaust that looks like a set of udders; but if all goes to plan this British-made rocket car will be the first to break 1000mph. It'll take 55 seconds to hit that speed, just enough time for driver Andy Green to think about what he's got himself into. Don't expect to fit much in the boot — that's where the 3000°C engine goes.
bloodhoundssc.com



0 TO 1000
MPH IN 55
SECONDS



ONEPLUS 2

It's hard to discuss the OnePlus 2 without going straight to its crazy price. For US\$300 you get specs that knock an iPhone 6S into a cocked hat, then find a fetching outfit to go with that hat and wear it while joining Samsung's similarly-specced Galaxy S6 at the Super Specs Party. If you can find one, buy it.
from US\$300 / oneplus.net



BEN AINSLIE'S 'BATMAN' BOAT

Land Rover BAR is the Team Sky of sailing. The crew's grand plan to become the first Brit winners of the America's Cup in 2017 rests on its secret 'T2' superboat, heavily based on this prototype. It can reach 60mph thanks to its enormous, 23m-high articulating wing sail.

STUFF THAT'S FAST

4G

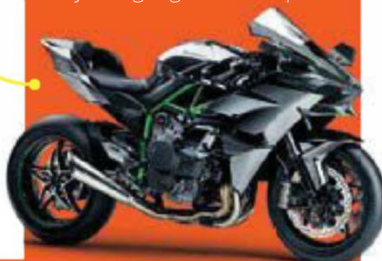
Why should you wait to see that crisp shaped like the Wu-Tang Clan logo, or twiddle your thumbs while that Vine of Danny Dyer calling somebody a "toerag" buffers?

SOLID STATE DRIVES

SSDs are to your old hard drive what the Walkman was to vinyl. Maybe in the future, people will pay more for old, slow HDDs because the data seems 'warmer'.

KAWASAKI H2R

All motorbikes are fast, a result of them having fewer wheels and cupholders than cars. So one with a supercharger was only ever going to be 220mph+.



STUFF THAT'S FREE

EMOJI

Ghost. Banana. Fire. Penguin. Saxophone. In 2015, you need never write these words again. What next? Xenomorph. Haggis. Despair.

STRAVA

There are two types of cyclist and runner: those who use Strava, and those who don't think this whole app thing is ever going to take off.

WINDOWS 10

Yes, it's 2015's Most Prosaic Download, but Microsoft's return to the Start Menu is possibly the most graceful U-turn in tech.

THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

Science at school: boring. Science at The Science Museum: AMAZE. Those interactive exhibitions teach you more than GCSEs ever did.

CITYMAPPER

Uber's cheap, but it's not as cheap as a night bus. The money you save can buy a couple of fish 'n' cheese pies, and bingo: a whole bus to yourself.

HALT AND CATCH FIRE

Set in the 1980s, when megahertz were genuinely mega, this TV series from AMC (of *Mad Men* and *Breaking Bad* fame) follows a group of visionary nerds trying to build a computer company. There's a fair bit of cringeworthy writing and network-friendly theatricality, but also plenty of opportunities to say things like "Well, of course assembly language doesn't actually work like that" to the empty side of the sofa.

STUFF WE'RE ADDICTED TO



CROWD-FUNDING

Kickstarter *et al* have gone and made everyone a potential tech billionaire. You no longer need an in with a Silicon Valley investor to get your amazing ideas off the ground — all you need is an Indiegogo page. Without crowdfunding, there'd be no Pebble watches, Ubuntu Edge phones or Ouya consoles.



TINDER

Love may be a losing game, but luckily dating is now a really fun one. No more nervous introductions in bars or getting every girl in town to try on a shoe you found: Tinder makes searching for The One as easy and addictive as simply swiping to the left or right. Ahhh, the romance. **US\$free / iOS, Android**



SERIAL

Part murder mystery, part all-encompassing phenomenon: no other podcast is responsible for so many amateur detectives. The question of whether Adnan Syed killed his girlfriend 15 years ago had 75 million people hooked as *This American Life* journalist Sarah Koenig told the story. Riveting stuff indeed. **serialpodcast.org**



INSTAGRAM

There's more to this photo-packed app than pictures of cheese on toast hangover cures and Kim K's rear end. Broaden your horizons with the likes of the @nasagoddard account, for example, and you've got incredible pictures of the wonders of the universe right at your fingertips. **US\$free / iOS, Android**



AIRBNB

Time to dump the snorers in 12-bed hostels, buffet hotel breakfasts and beige B&Bs: Airbnb has made travelling far more interesting. With local hosts offering up their flats, treehouses and igloos, you can find cheap, authentic and bragworthy places to stay all over the world. Plus you don't need to bring your own teabags. **airbnb.com**



AWESOME

There are always some tasks you can't be bothered to do, and this text service makes that first-world problem vanish. Whether you're having to book train tickets home for that unavoidable family dinner, or find a last-minute present for your significant other — text Awesome and they'll help. **textawesome.co.uk**



FLYABILITY GIMBALL

Proof that drones aren't just for scaring away pigeons and buzzing the tower (or next door's chimney, as it's better known), the winner of this year's Drones For Good competition was a 'copter that flies inside a protective cage, designed to help find survivors in hazardous environments.



SPACE X

To be completely honest, we've put SpaceX on this list because, if (or should that be when?) we decide to launch *Stuff's* Mars Edition, it's Elon Musk's private space company that'll be flying us there. After including them in the Earth edition, we're hoping they might knock a billion or two off the ticket. Whaddaya say, Elon? Deal?

THE MARTIAN

From the man behind *Blade Runner*, *Alien* and *Prometheus*, and the man in front of *The Departed* and *True Grit*, the story of an astronaut and engineer who is accidentally left behind on Mars and determines to survive using geekery. It's based on a novel by a former *World Of Warcraft* programmer, but don't let that put you off.



DJI PHANTOM 3

No, it may not be able to carry your shopping, but the Standard model (pictured) is simple to fly and affordable, while the Professional version can shoot pixel-packed 4K video – and your flying Ford won't be able to do that. Okay, it probably will. But it doesn't exist yet. This is a connoisseur's drone. **US\$950 / dji.com**



LILY

We are not pro camera operators. We do the awesome action and we expect someone else to do the filming, and so we applaud the emerging age of the follow-me drone. There are several – AirDog was the pioneer – but we like Lily's ability to take off from water. And her sweet little face. **US\$700 / lily.camera**



NO MAN'S SKY

2016's most exciting game isn't a bro-tastic first-person shooter or yet another sequel; it's an ambitious universe simulator from a tiny studio in sleepy Guildford. Mine for minerals to upgrade your kit, rob cargo ships, or take on pirates in a world bigger than any game ever made. **no-mans-sky.com**



BREAKTHROUGH LISTEN

This \$100m project, starting in January, will be our biggest ever search for intelligent life in space.

THE PHILAE LANDER

A bouncy landing then a seven-month snooze? That's just how we'd explore outer space too.

AQUILA

This solar-powered drone will circle for 90 days, beaming down data to cat-video-free areas.

TERRAFUGIA TF-X

Yes, that's a flying car. Here's to a future where we'll take off vertically at the press of a button.

THE CLOUD

Remember dreaming of the day when you'd be able to remotely access your data and contacts?

25 VERDE

This five-storey Turin treehouse has 150 trees that make it look like something from *Jumanji*.

STUFF IN THE SKY



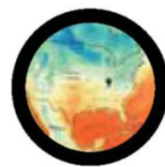
RIMOWA F13

Back in 1933, Junkers made the world's first commercial airliner, the F13. Over 80 years later we have 40 million flights a day and Ryanair, so Rimowa's plans to build a fleet of replica F13s to take to the skies for test flights in 2016 is most welcome. Bet they won't charge you a fiver for a sweaty cheese toastie on board either.



TENTSILE TRILOGY

A cross between a hammock and a treehouse, the Trilogy is a tent that can be suspended between trees, with enough space inside to sleep six people. It might be a pain when you need to answer a call of nature, but it keeps you off the ground and out of the reach of angry badgers. **US\$850 / tentsile.com**



DARK SKY

Talking about the weather is typically the preserve of your parents and Test cricket commentators. Download Dark Sky and you too will revel in this illustrious company. With notifications for showers and a wealth of neatly visualised data to dig into, you'll bore on about rainstorms before you know it. **US\$3.99 / iOS**



OCADO

Shopping for gadgets is fun but it's still shopping. Shopping for organic fennel is less fun, although when you can do it from the sofa while wearing a onesie it becomes less of a chore (remember to put some clothes on before they're delivered). But that's not really why Ocado is on this list. Ocado is here because of its SecondHands robot project, which aims to have a humanoid helper in its warehouse within five years. But will it be able to tell the difference between smoked and unsmoked salmon? We'd be happy to spend a few days teaching it...

ocado.com

AUTO-REMOVES SOCIAL MEDIA



TWEETBOT

There are few things more unbearable than Twitter during a TV show you don't watch. *Great British Bake Off*? More like *Bog Off*. Tweetbot's iOS app lets you mute hashtags, users and even apps, so you can block someone's auto-tweeted running stats and pretend Piers Morgan never really existed.

US\$4.99 / iOS



MOMAX IPOW XTRA

You don't always function in the morning until you've poured something brightly coloured and bordering on radioactive down your neck, and neither does your phone. This portable charger has enough juice inside for nearly five iPhone charges – it even comes in a can.

US\$40 / momax.net



KINDLE PAPERWHITE

Until now, printed books have been higher-resolution than e-readers, but Paperwhite crosses that threshold and joins proper books in 300dpi territory. It's still not as good as real books for hitting a wasp, but it's better for hiding the fact that you're reading steamy werewolf fiction.

US\$120 / amazon.com



AMAZON PRIME

Ordering an industrial-sized tub of peanut butter with free next-day delivery is clearly amazing.

THE 'UNDO SEND' FEATURE IN GMAIL

For when you've emailed your unmentionables to your boss.

SKYPE

Video call anywhere in the world for free? Skype had an idea so good that we now use it as a verb.

SAGE SMART TOASTER

The toaster market was ripe for disruption, so Heston Blumenthal added a 'bit more' button to his.

PAYING FOR THINGS BY TAPPING YOUR PHONE

You used to faff around with PINs like some medieval serf. Phew.

PLEX

Install it on anything you want to stream media to... that's it. The only humming will be from you.

STUFF THAT MAKES LIFE EASIER



GOOGLE MAPS

How anyone got anywhere before it is a mystery. Turn-by-turn navigation has changed the pedestrian game and, thanks to Street View, we can spy on where we're going before we get there. The only problem is that live traffic updates have destroyed our number one excuse for being late for work.



PHILIPS HUE LIGHTBULB

The first really nice smart lighting system is still the best by far... and with new entry-level white lights and wall switches, Apple HomeKit support and even TV shows, movies and games that interact with your lights, it's hard to see Hue being beaten any time soon.

from US\$60 / amazon.com



GOOGLE ONHUB

Wi-Fi routers are boring, but Google's OnHub is the least boring of the lot. It lets you prioritise particular devices to get bigger chunks of the bandwidth pie so your Netflix binge doesn't stutter to a stop – and it doesn't expect you to think in binary code. Bet you still fix it by turning it off and on again.

US\$200 / amazon.co.uk



NEST THERMOSTAT

The traditional thermostat is an unfathomable piece of tech. Stop fruitlessly jabbing at it and get Nest, which lets you control the temperature of your house through an app on your phone. Over time, the smart system will learn your heating ways, saving you energy and precious pennies.

US\$250 / nest.com



SMARTER WI-FI COFFEE MACHINE

Most mornings you can get your gentleman butler to brew you up a Monsooned Malabar, but you gave Aloysius the week off. Luckily, this machine is just as good at making coffee to your exact taste, equally adept at knowing when you're awake, and almost as attractive.

US\$220 / firebox.com



SKY+

You're on the bus. But wait! You forgot to set the Sky box to record *University Challenge* and it's the big grudge match between Lancaster and York. Not a problem – just whip out the Sky+ app and set it up remotely. Stick it on series link if you want. That's what Jeremy Paxman would do.

US\$free / iOS, Android

AUTO-DIMS FOR MOVIES

MASON RESOLUTION

The bike industry is as busy as a bucket of bees, especially in Britain where Olympic and Tour de France success have created a whole generation of obesity-shedding cyclists. This UK-designed, Italian-crafted bike is made of steel but its ride, geometry and disc brakes are bang up to date. from US\$3860 / masoncycles.cc



STUFF WE CAN'T AFFORD



BMW i8

With its Batmobile-from-the-future looks, the i8 has coaxed petrolheads into changing their minds about being so awfully beastly to the environment.

OPPO PM-1

Oppo normally makes phones and Blu-ray players; but anything Dr Dre can do, it can do better. Really quite a lot better. The night bus has never sounded so good.



CLEARAUDIO OVATION

With carefully balanced weights and painstakingly positioned belts, high-end turntables often look more like lab experiments than music machines. By contrast, Clearaudio's Ovation looks surprisingly sensible. Don't let those looks fool you, though: it's crazy for your vinyl collection. US\$8930 / clearaudio.de



FORD GT

We waited 10 years for a sequel to the original Ford GT, but it's been worth it. The new GT is a roaring great wedge of speed, muscle and racing stripes. You can't afford one, but if you're an Xbox gamer you'll actually be able to drive the Mk II before it even comes out, in *Forza Motorsport 6*. US\$400,000 / ford.com

B&O BEOLAB90

The Danish audio masters decided to celebrate their 90th anniversary by creating a speaker that pumps out 8200 watts of earth shattering tune-age and weighs in at a monstrous 137kg. Oh, and they're US\$40,000 each. Yup, each. Don't mind us, we'll be robbing a bank to afford one. US\$40,000 / bang-olufsen.com



LEICA Q

Compared to the pricier Leica M, the full-frame Q seems positively affordable... but then, affordable doesn't mean the same to Leica as it doesn't to everybody else. This is a compact camera that costs over \$4000. Look at the pictures, though, and you'll see exactly where that money went. US\$4250 / leica-camera.com



GET TO THE BACK OF THE Q

HELLO?
CAN
ANYONE
HEAR ME?**WINGSUITS**

Imagine: a man in a wingsuit crashes through the window having soared through the sky like a flying squirrel – you're going to listen to what he's got to say, right? Either way, it's impossible to get bored of watching people fall with Buzz Lightyear-esque style, especially when it results in shots like this one from Red Bull.

**LIFELINE**

The only game for the Apple Watch worth playing, *Lifeline* tasks you with trying to save a stranded astronaut, one message at a time. It works in real time, so if Tyler has to trek across a crater, you'll have to wait for him before you can carry on. And what comes to those who wait? Very good things. **US\$0.99 / iOS**

**APPLE WATCH**

It's by no means essential, but every time we get a calendar notification or an email or catch a train or start Strava without having to use our phones, it proves itself that little bit more useful. It has some stiff competition, but this is still the best-looking smartwatch you can buy. **US\$550 / apple.com**

**HTC VIVE**

After decades of Console War, virtual reality is the next great battleground and Oculus Rift and PlayStation VR are major players. But with motion sensors that let you walk around inside games, the Valve-engineered Vive is the virtual reality headset that's top of our most wanted list. Especially if it comes with a copy of *Portal 3*. **US\$760 / htcvr.com**

STUFF TO SAVE THE WORLD**CITIZENFOUR**

An Oscar-winning doc about Edward Snowden's spying revelations – this is what the term 'eye-opener' really means.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON LIVEWIRE

The future of electric motorbikes: it's going to be hair-raising.

VW XL1

Billed as the most aerodynamic car in the world, it's the vehicle most likely to influence what we drive in the future.

DARPA ROBOTICS CHALLENGE

This talent show for 'bots featured some truly stunning works in progress.

TESLA MODEL S

The sexy Model S has wrestled the reputation of electric vehicles away from the G-Wiz and the milk float.

HIVE.CO.UK

Online bookseller Hive now sells e-books, CDs and DVDs. And it helps support real, local shops. Remember them?

STUFF TO WEAR**MICROSOFT HOLOLENS**

An AR headset that projects high-def 3D holograms into your eyes, the HoloLens promises to change gaming, entertainment, learning and, well, everything.

SENA 10C

This Bluetooth headset for motorbike helmets has a 1080p camera built in, so you can grass up that Audi that cut you up on the bypass. Visionary.

LYLE & SCOTT CONTACTLESS JACKET

This coat has an NFC chip in the cuff, so you can wave your wrist over card machines like a Jedi and you'll pass serenely through.

IGROW LASER HELMET

Why would you want to wear a mad scientist helmet that shoots lasers into your scalp for 25 mins a day, every other day? Why, to re-grow your hair, of course.

**GARMIN FENIX 3**

You wouldn't normally go out dining wearing your triathlon kit (most have an unwritten 'no wetsuits' rule anyway), but the Fenix 3 is a fitness watch you can easily wear every day. Plus it means you'll be ready if you end up in an impromptu post-pub 10k. **US\$500 / fenix3.garmin.com**

**AMPSTRIP**

Take wearable tech to its logical conclusion and you get the Ampstrip – a heart-rate sensor that literally sticks to your body. It's light, with a seven-day battery life, plus it's waterproof so you can wear it 24/7 and not worry about it malfunctioning in your post-workout shower. **US\$150 / ampstrip.com**

**GOPRO HERO4 SESSION**

GoPro's mini Session is a marvel of so-tiny-it-looks-like-you-could-swallow-it-and-film-your-own-internal-organs engineering. It's the lightest and smallest camera GoPro have ever made – in fact, you'll probably forget you're wearing it. **US\$200 / gopro.com**

SLEEKER
THAN A
FORMULA
1 CAR

**DOUBLE
BUBBLE**

The domed viewports are made from thick, strong acrylic, capable of withstanding high pressure.



**COD
BOTHERER**

At 5m long and 1800kg, this is the smallest and lightest personal sub, and if you lose power it'll naturally float back up.

**DIVE
DIVE DIVE**

Rather than ballast tanks, the Dragon has six electric thrusters in order to descend to the 'edge of darkness'.

M A R I N E F L Y O L O G Y

Why wait for space tourism when you can be an aquanaut today?
Stuff takes a dive in the world's most advanced personal submarine

[Words Richard Taylor]

Bringing up the subject of Bond villains at the launch of a personal submarine might sound clichéd. But in the case of DeepFlight's Dragon, it's justified. The California-based company is run by Graham Hawkes, who designed and piloted the Bond-bothering Mantis submarine in 1981's *For Your Eyes Only*. Some 34 years on, his firm is taking *Stuff* on one of the first Dragon 'flights' – with less nefarious ambitions but just as much stardust.

The DeepFlight Dragon isn't the first personal submarine, but it does uniquely promise to let you 'fly' with sea life with virtually no pilot training. Why not just go scuba diving instead? For starters, not everyone wants to hump an oxygen tank on their back and inhale through a rubber tube. And more importantly, scuba doesn't offer anything quite like a hovering craft that lets you give fish a very real UFO experience.

FLYING LOW

The DeepFlight Dragon is no flight of Kickstarter fancy – it comes from serious submarine heritage. For the past two decades, the family-owned concern run by British-born sub pioneer Hawkes has been busy developing what he calls "the most advanced and high-performance personal submarines on the planet". It has been redesigned

no less than five times. Its predecessor, the Super Falcon, was unveiled a few years ago, but just three units were made to order.

For a certain species of billionaire, the superyacht isn't complete without a submarine that looks like a jet fighter. Sadly, the older Super Falcon doesn't just look like a plane – it also requires the services of a trained pilot. Its design is based around the aerodynamic principles of lift and drag, so it can perform jet-style banks, flips and barrel rolls, all some 120 metres down.

ENTER THE DRAGON

But now the DeepFlight founder says he's ready to venture into another realm entirely. The Dragon, available to preorder for a heady US\$1.5m, isn't a race machine, cruising at a top speed of just four knots (around 8kph). But it does have two unique features. Instead of ballast systems, which conventional subs use to help them drop, the Dragon dives using vertical thrusters. This lack of ballast allows it to have a fixed 'positive buoyancy', ensuring it always floats back to the surface. These thrusters also give it the ability to hover, drone-like, so you can hang out by a reef, admiring the marine life nestling within.

Most importantly, it's very easy to control. "This is the game changer," Graham claims. "It's so smart that even a complete idiot will be able to use it safely." As luck would have it, there's one on hand to put that claim to the test. ▶

HOW DEEP?

120m

DeepFlight Dragon max depth



253m

World record freedive, set by Herbert Nitsch in Santorini, June 2012



1000m

Triton 3300/3 captures first ever footage of the giant squid in July 2012



3780m

The final resting depth of the RMS Titanic in the North Atlantic



7000m

Deepest living depth of the dumbo octopus



10,908m

Deepsea Challenger's world record for deepest solo dive



11,034m

The Pacific Ocean's Mariana Trench, the deepest point on Earth



SPLASH TEST DUMMY

And so I drive three hours north of San Francisco to the watery playground of Lake Tahoe, in the Sierra Nevada. As I approach the shoreline, it comes into view: the Dragon's slender form is more futuristic F1 racer than classic submarine, albeit with hemispherical canopies enclosing both pilots in their respective compartments. To stabilise the craft, there are four cylindrical, quadcopter-style vertical thrusters integrated horizontally at each edge of the drivetrain. Powering them all, a six-hour lithium battery – that's six hours assuming you're not trying to chase a pod of dolphins.

Today my adrenaline is pumping hard – I'm getting a chance to actually pilot the sub. With a quick onshore briefing, it really does seem very straightforward: one left-side vertical throttle to control downward thrust; and to my right, a joystick for manoeuvring forward, reverse, left and right at any given depth. Mounted directly ahead of me outside the cockpit is a unit housing a monochrome display sitting between a manual depth gauge and compass. And that's it. No futuristic touchscreens. In some ways it reminds me of a Lotus: a luscious sporting exterior, but with the most basic of cabins.

As this is one of the inaugural voyages, the obvious 'what if?' questions race through my mind. Being

from the gantry, and we chug gently away from potential hazards – boats and other people, most of whom look suitably curious. The heat beats down on our domed greenhouses. No issue: the oxygen cascading through the air vent keeps me cool. "You ready, Jester?" asks Graham through his two-way Bluetooth headset.

Graham radios up to his team through the marine VHF system. I crane my neck to look up, my view of the receding surface unimpeded through the glass canopy as we sink into the Tahoe waters. And then the bubbles stop, and suddenly we are still. "See?!" exclaims Graham. "We're hovering. That's the most technical of challenges and we've overcome it."

SUNDAY DIVER

Now call me old-fashioned, but when I'm in a sub, I want to go deep. Not simply two feet under, even though I recognise this lake is hardly a reef-laden paradise. Graham senses I don't share his sense of boyish excitement at the hovering feat, and agrees to venture deeper – with me in control.

And so I thrust the lever forward – a little too aggressively for Graham, who doesn't relish his million-dollar baby plummeting to the lake floor with a maniac at the helm. The LED number counter climbs as we sink, though my ears aren't popping so I'm not physically gauging the rate of

THE VIEW FROM THE DEEPFLIGHT DRAGON COCKPIT



THE BUBBLES STOP, AND WE ARE STILL... WE'RE HOVERING

enclosed in an oxygenated bubble up to 400 feet underwater is, I surmise, surely a recipe for risk. What if this prototype misbehaves? After all, only 48 hours earlier the Dragon's maiden excursion had been beset by glitches. Graham tries to reassure me. "We have backup oxygen supplies for 24 hours." And leaks? "It won't leak." Should I do anything really dumb, the veteran submariner could always reclaim control.

THAT SINKING FEELING

With Graham up front, I clamber tentatively into my cockpit. It feels snug, but happily I passed the height (less than 6ft 3in) and weight (under 125kg) test; this is no craft for 'people of size'.

One final piece of business to take care of before launch is call signs. Graham has sorted his already: 'Grey Hawk'. I desperately seek inspiration. 'Jester' it is, then. The platform lowers us into the water

descent. Twenty feet. Thirty feet. I look up at my depth gauge. Forty. Fifty. I bank hard to the right. "Whoa!" Graham crackles through my headset. "Easy... pull up. Pull up!"

And within seconds he's wrested back control. We stabilise, and I breathe a sigh of relief as any sniff of disaster is averted. Right now, the onboard software is still a work in progress. The market-ready Dragon will be able to tame itself, with depth sensors delineating 'safe zones'.

DAMP SPELLS EXPECTED

We gently ease up to the surface and cruise back to shore. I'm relaxed again, and able to contemplate the amazing possibilities the Dragon could present in more scenic waters. I imagine the scuba fraternity will scream deep blue murder. Nothing can beat the freedom of roaming free, they'll argue. And while it's true the Dragon doesn't offer the same experience, it's a far easier, more accessible and arguably safer way to explore the deeps. In the Dragon, someone with zero training can venture far longer and deeper than a recreational scuba diver.

Its current pricetag puts it far outside the means of ordinary people, but DeepFlight confirms that it has plans to make the Dragon available for rent. And who knows? With powerful, efficient motors and batteries becoming cheaper by the minute thanks to the electric car market, it's possible you'll be seeing a lot more of the Dragon and its ilk. Time to start saving. ►

BATTERY READOUTS

Going out 9% charged and hoping to find a plug socket might work for your phone, but not here.

VERTICAL THROTTLE

This friction-free lever controls depth: push it forward to dive, then pull it back to about 40% thrust to hover.

INSTRUMENT PANEL

This gives you mission-critical info like total expedition time and maximum depth reached.

AIR-CON

Handy both for breathing and for keeping cool, should the 400 feet of water above you give you a sweaty brow.

GET IN THE FLIPPING SEA

If you're looking to splash out, we've got more subs than a well-stocked bakery

TRITON 3300/3

Triton is the granddaddy of civilian sub operations; in the summer of 2012 it achieved a world first when this model managed to film the elusive giant squid. With an operating depth of one kilometre, the Triton certainly trumps the Dragon in raw diving stats. But along with costing several million to buy, its models also need to be operated by a qualified sub pilot. With only 400 of those worldwide, you'd probably best book ahead. **US\$3m / tritonsubs.com**

Watch the amazing doc about it here: bit.ly/squidsub



SCUBSTER NEMO

More scuba accessory than minisub, Scubster's vehicles give divers a speed boost over using traditional flippers. The original model was pedal-powered, but the firm is now raising funds on Kickstarter for this electric model, which can dive as deep as 60m. It can even do rolls and flips, for when you're cruising past a hard-to-impress octopus. **from US\$10,000 / scubster.org**



SEAMAGINE AURORA-3C

This pun-tastic DeepFlight rival has been in the game since the '90s, and its latest model can plunge 1.5km into the deep blue. The bulbous Aurora-3C is spacious enough for two plus a pilot, while its compact form can be plonked on a superyacht. Its acrylic dome gives you a fine view of that hammerhead heading straight for your face. **from US\$1m / seamagine.com**



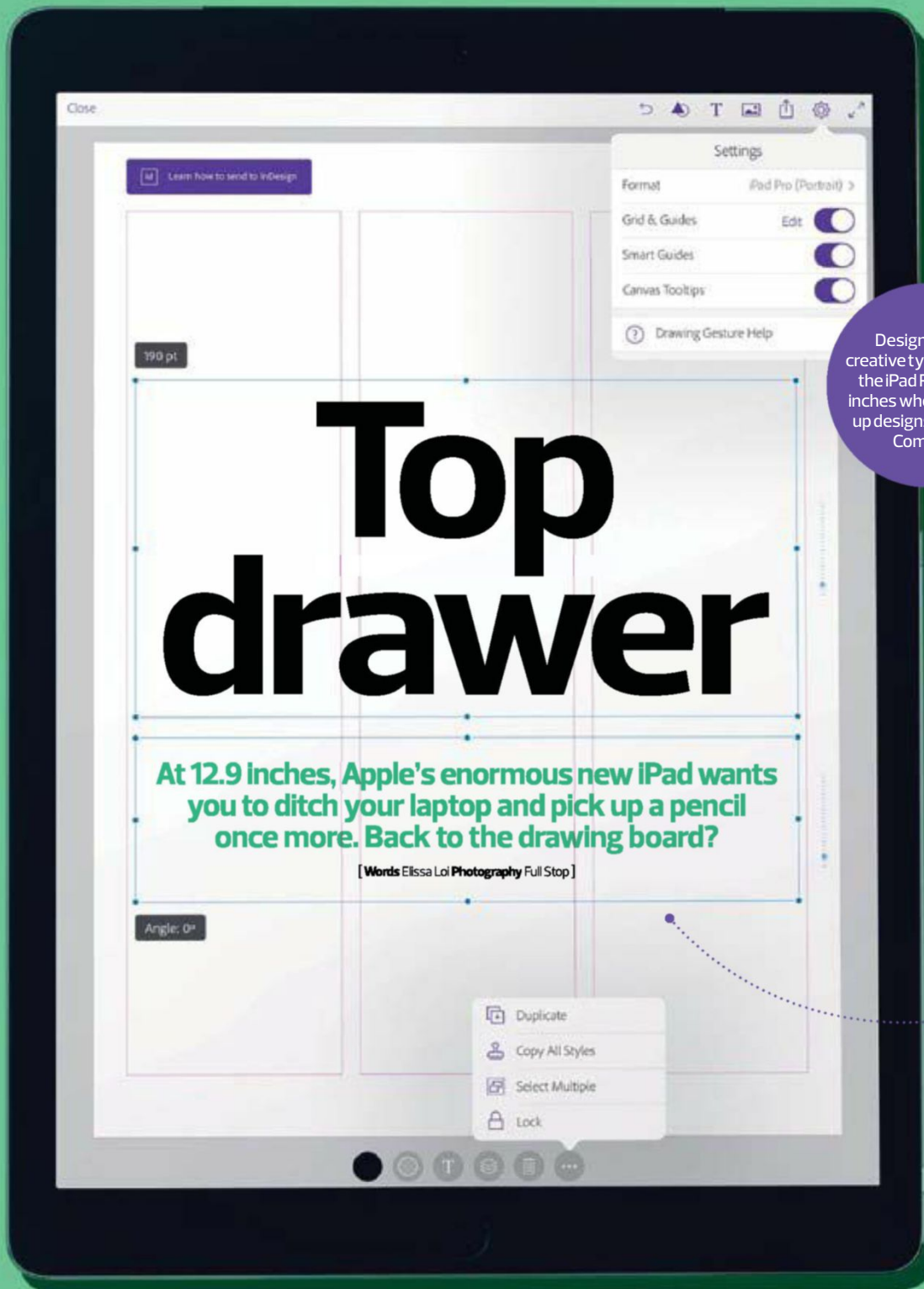
Y.CO YELLOW SUBMARINE

Though you can't quite live on this yellow submarine, it will let you stay down at a depth of 160m for eight hours. Sold by a luxury yacht maker as a little accessory to its megaboats, the sub is almost 3m high and roomy enough for five passengers plus a pilot. Oh, and there's a fridge and an onboard toilet, should the jitters get the best of you. **US\$50k / y.co**



SEABREACHER X

Normal submarines are all very exciting, until you find out you can terrorise jetskiers in a craft that looks like a shark. The Seabreacher doesn't go lower than a few feet, but skims along the surface at up to 50mph and (if you're brave) jumps vertically out of the water. There are killer whale and dolphin versions for dedicated followers of cetaceans. **from US\$80,000 / seabreacher.com**



Designers and creative types will love the iPad Pro's extra inches when mocking up designs on Adobe Comp CC.

Apple has a habit of chuckling at new things, then remaking them. Samsung's Note phablets seemed hilariously big at first, but the iPhone 6 Plus has been hugely popular; Android Wear arrived, and then Apple dropped its Watch. And now, in the wake of Microsoft's surprising success with the Surface, comes the iPad Huge. Like the Surface, this monstertab is here

to get things done, not just doss around with you on Netflix. And it's best used with a keyboard and stylus... sorry, we meant to say 'Pencil'.

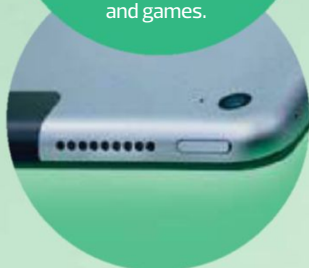
Of course, Steve Jobs didn't care much for prodding touchscreens with a glorified twig. "Who wants a stylus?" he famously proclaimed, but that was in 2007. Apple's idea now is that all that Retina real estate

will let designer types shake off their laptops and work on a more portable device... so long as iOS 9's apps are accommodating enough.

Microsoft was smart to invent a tablet that was as work-ready as a laptop. But with millions of people working on MacBook Airs, is the Pro the work tablet the world has been waiting for?

Crowned in sound

However you hold the Pro, it automatically channels the highs and mids to the top two of its four speakers, which makes for better sound in movies and games.



1 Apple Pencil

Apple's Pencil is a handsome, pure white stylus that connects to the iPad Pro via Bluetooth. Just touch the Pencil to the Pro and magical digital ink will flow straight out of its nib. It's almost like writing on paper, if paper came covered in glass and cost US\$800 per sheet.

As someone who prefers writing over typing, I loved scribbling ideas down on the iPad Pro. It would be great if the native Notes app could convert my handwriting into text, like Livescribe's smartpens do, instead of saving the scrawl as a picture. Still, at least the app is smart enough to differentiate between your palm and the Pencil, so you don't get to give yourself cramp using it awkwardly.

US\$100 / apple.com

Tech specs

Screen 12.9in 2732x2048 LED-backlit IPS LCD **Processor** Apple A9X 2.26GHz **OS** iOS 9 **RAM** 4GB **Battery** 10,307mAh **Storage** 32/128GB **Camera** 8MP rear, 1.2MP front **Dimensions** 306x221x6.9mm, 713g **Price** from US\$800 / apple.com

2 Smart Keyboard

If you can only afford to buy one iPad Pro accessory, then go for the Smart Keyboard. Given that Apple's saying this megatablet can replace your MacBook or Windows PC, you're going to need one to be able to type on it, and type properly.

The Smart Keyboard is covered in a smooth, mesh-like fabric that's resistant to water and stains. The keys have a nice give to them, with more depth than you'd expect, and it connects in seconds. Magnets give the keyboard a surprisingly sturdy hold on the iPad Pro, and the triangular fold at the back gives it plenty of stability in your lap. If you're used to a MacBook, the keyboard layout is the same.

US\$170 / apple.com

Goes large inside and out (fries not included)

At almost 13 inches, the iPad Pro looks like someone ripped a MacBook display off its hinges. It's ginormous when you see it for the first time. Pick it up, though, and you'll find the Pro's light enough, at 713g, to negate any misgivings you might have about its gargantuan proportions. And, aside from the speaker grilles lining each of its four corners, it looks exactly like any other iPad.

Apple is extremely proud of the fact that it's managed to cram 5.6 million pixels into the Pro's screen, giving it a 2732x2048 pixel payoff. So despite the bigger display, you're still getting the blisteringly sharp viewing experience you're used to with iOS devices. That means vibrant colours, deep blacks, and no discernible pixels as far as my eyes could detect.

Despite the tasty display, the Pro doesn't pack in 3D Touch, which is a real shame. Those touchscreen shortcuts are extra handy on the bigger screen of the iPhone 6s Plus, and we reckon Apple would have found even more uses for its haptic tech on the Pro's expanse of glass.

Speed demon

One feature the iPad Pro does have over the iPhone 6s is speed – that's thanks to the seriously fast new 64-bit A9X chip. This processor is so powerful that it can simultaneously render up to three streams of 4K video footage in iMovie, or rotate a 3D model of a skeleton in the 3D4Medical app without so much as a stutter. Impressive stuff.

Even high-performance games like *Geometry Wars* and *Asphalt 8* will flow without a hitch on this tablet. That said, although incredibly immersive, playing a racer feels like driving a super-luxurious bus. Simpler, tap-based titles fare better on this work-centric iPad.

More importantly, the Pro is specced with enough oomph to withstand the



most taxing of multitasking demands, and it won't give up on you at an inopportune moment. Our battery test lasted 14 hours, 18 minutes and 50 seconds, to be exact – a lot more than the 10 hours Apple predicted.

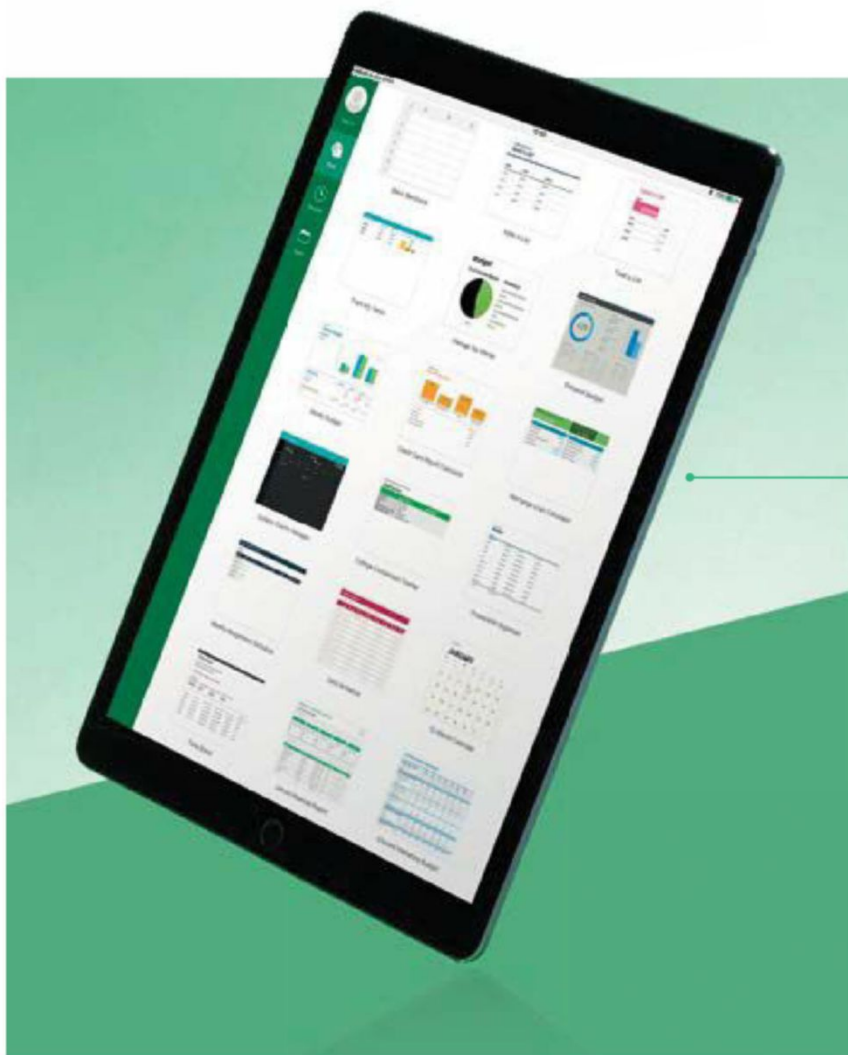
OS-some

Clearly, the elephant in the room when you're talking about Apple's iPad Pro is Microsoft's Surface Pro 4. In the case of this massive tablet face-off, it's more like the C-130 Hercules in the room.

iOS 9 is the main point of difference between the two devices, with Surface Pro hybrids running full-fat Windows 10 while the iPad skimps on El Capitan for its mobile alternative. This means the Pro gives you all the iPad apps you're used to, but they're maxed out in terms of visual experience and the processing heft that's supporting them. At present a lot of developers for the Mac App Store are hesitant to get onboard the iPad Pro bandwagon, so you might not find your favourites available just yet.

At least when they do arrive they'll be well served by iOS 9's Split View mode, which is like having a pair of iPad Minis side by side – except in a way that's actually useful. You can comfortably read emails and look up information without having to zoom in on details. The Picture-in-Picture mode is also great for shrinking videos into a small window while you browse your Facebook feed.





Apple iPad Pro: the verdict

The iPad Pro is not for everyone. If you don't see the value of owning such a large tablet, then its generous curves won't be enough to persuade you to buy one. That's OK – just get the iPad Air 2 instead. It's still our top tablet all-rounder, and the best iPad to slouch on the sofa with.

But if you want to actually make stuff with your slate, then pick up a Pro. It's the perfect digital coffee-table book that just about doubles as a laptop. Sure, it won't actually replace your MacBook Pro or PC, but you'll be surprised at just how much iOS 9 is capable of – particularly when it's combined with a Smart Keyboard and Apple Pencil.

The app-based incarnations of desktop software like Photoshop and Excel are great for bite-sized bursts of productivity, especially when you're on the move or in between meetings. Split View mode also means old favourites

such as Slack and Tweetbot are more useful than ever before.

Sure, you can't get quite as much done on the iPad Pro as you can with a Surface Pro 4, but we found Microsoft's po-faced alternative really struggled as a tablet in testing (that's why it got a two-star review on Stuff.tv and missed out on a Top 10 ranking in this mag). Apple's office-friendly colossus gets its fundamentals spot on, and that's enough to make it the better buy for besuited folk.

So what's holding back the iPad Pro from a perfect rating? More than its borderline exorbitant pricing, it's that lack of 3D Touch and an app ecosystem that hasn't really caught up with what the Pro can offer. At the moment, you just can't make the most of this tablet's immense display.

But for a first crack of the hybrid whip, the Pro makes a tremendous impression.

STUFF SAYS ★★★★★

The supercharged, supersized iPad Pro is for serious creatives with seriously deep pockets

Five of the best apps

Which downloads will make the most of that mammoth screen?

Paper (US\$free)



More than the sketching app it started out as, Paper has evolved to cater for people who aren't just daydreaming with a stylus in hand. It now offers photo imports, text notes and a diagram pen that tidies up your straight lines and regular shapes. Best of all, it's still free.

Slack (US\$free)



Any app that helps you spend less time on email is good by us, so that makes Slack an absolute gem. It divides your work-related channels so you can easily send messages, photos and large files with informal ease. Plus, it supports emoji.

Microsoft Excel (US\$free)



Google's Drive apps aren't bad at all, but Microsoft's own suite of Office downloads trumps them for sheer efficiency. Excel is the pick of the bunch, allowing spreadsheet aficionados to effortlessly switch between PC and tablet usage no matter what OS they hop across.

Procreate (US\$5.99)



The artistic app of choice for iPads may sound like an expert fertilisation tool, but this effervescent download has Apple Pencil support for 128 brushes and allows you to paint on 16Kx4K canvas – which is a lot, last time we checked.

iMovie (US\$4.99)



That 4K video we mentioned? You can edit it in iMovie, which is truly impressive for a tablet app. When you consider the extra space the iPad Pro's screen affords for both spotting and tweaking details, budding Bigelows can get filmic wherever they are.

YOUR GUIDE TO DSF...



It's the Dubai Shopping festival - a 32-day shopping extravaganza that is a perfect mix of daily shopping deals, cool competitions and awesome entertainment. Some gadgets will be available for a fraction of the cost, and here's our pick of the top tech deals you need to know about.

KEY: ● GADGETS ● FITNESS ● TOYS ● MUSIC ● PHOTOGRAPHY

● **Sony Xperia Z5 Premium**
US\$790 / sonymobile.com

Sony's flashy new flagship not only has an impressive 23MP snapper, but is the first ever smartphone to sport an eye-blistering 4K screen. This is the 'it' phone to impress your friends with for 2016.



SONY

● **LG 55EG920**
US\$4100 / lg.com

The combination of 4K and OLED has been a revolution within the television industry and this gorgeous set from LG is a great jumping on point that will make your movies and games look incredible without breaking the bank.



● **Lenovo Yoga 900**
US\$1200 / lenovo.com

This 13.3in laptop is the world's thinnest without skimping on specs. Its 14.9mm thin frame houses up to a powerful Intel Core i7 processor and its trademark hinge will let it flip all the way round into tablet mode.



Lenovo

● **Xbox One Elite Controller**
US\$150 / xbox.com

Level up your fragging skills with this Elite Xbox pad. It comes with interchangeable thumbsticks, D-pads and paddles so that you can set it up just how you like it and pull off the ultimate headshot.



● **PhotoFast Max Extreme**
from US\$80 / gme.ae

Beef up your iDevice's storage with this Lightning to USB compatible adaptor. Allowing for easy file transfer and backups, it's essential kit for the media hungry gadgeteer.



PhotoFast

● **LG V10**
US\$680 / lg.com

A true powerhouse, the V10 has a 2.1in display atop its 5.7in Quad HD main panel for quick access, and dual front 5MP cameras for extra-wide selfies.



● **Parrot Zik 3**
US\$149 / parrot.com

The latest update to these Philippe Strack-designed over-ears see them take on a cool croc-skin texture. They also get wireless charging chops added to their wireless playback and clever noise canceling.



Parrot

● **Fujifilm X-T10**
from US\$800 / fujifilm.com

With its retro-styling in full effect, this compact camera from Fujifilm shares the same APS-C sensor and friendly controls as the X-T1 with a price tag that hits just the right sweet-spot.



FUJIFILM

YOUR GUIDE TO DSF CONTINUED...

KEY: ● GADGETS ● FITNESS ● TOYS ● MUSIC ● PHOTOGRAPHY

● Sennheiser Momentum 2.0 Wireless

US\$540 / sennheiser.com

The perfect cans for the man about town, the Momentum's have always been in a class of their own. Now they're also wires-free and pumping high quality audio via Bluetooth aptX.



SENNHEISER

● Huawei Watch

US\$400 / huawei.com

Hands down one of the sleekest Android Wear smartwatches you can wrap around your wrist. Huawei's timepiece boasts a sharp AMOLED screen, heart rate sensor and up to a day and a half of battery life.



HUAWEI

● IO Hawk

US\$1800 / iohawk.com

With complete 360-degree freedom of movement and speeds reaching nearly 10kmph, these hover boards are poised to change our modes of personal transport in a big way.



IO HAWK

● Apple TV

US\$150 / apple.com

A streaming device that brims with the potential for an Apple-ised television future. Its Siri Remote is a game-changer and it's chock full of third-party apps and games to keep you busy between movies and tv shows.



● ROC Sport Superslim Wireless In-Ear Headphones

US\$190 / monsterproducts.com

If anyone knows about sweating, it's Cristiano Ronaldo, which is why he designed these wireless in-ears to be fully sweat resistant, regardless of how intense your workout may get.



MONSTER

● Microsoft Surface Pro 4

from US\$920 / microsoft.com

Redmond's best-selling hybrid is back with a larger 12.3in display, faster Intel Core processor, an updated stylus and the full force of Windows 10's OS might.

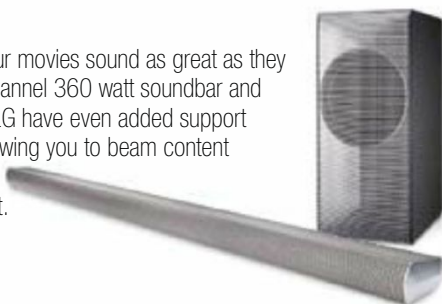


Microsoft

● LG Music Flow HS7

US\$540 / lg.com

It's time to make your movies sound as great as they look with this 4.1 channel 360 watt soundbar and subwoofer combo. LG have even added support for Google Cast, allowing you to beam content directly from your smartphone or tablet.



LG
Life's Good

● FitBit Surge

US\$250 / fitbit.com

Offering up a lightning-quick optical heart-rate monitor and GPS behind a 20x24mm monochrome LCD screen, this is FitBit's top tracker and it's one goal is to get you up and off of your couch.



fitbit


LG 55EG910

 US\$2200 / lg.com

Not ready to take the plunge into 4K? No problem. This OLED-only set will still bring out the best in your favourite content. You can expect inky blacks and stunning levels of contrast.


HTC One A9

 US\$460 / htc.com

Sporting a 5in 1080p AMOLED display, fingerprint sensor and a Snapdragon 617 processor, this offering from HTC is the right call if you're looking for an all-metal handset without a piece of fruit on the back.


Jabra Sport Coach

 US\$150 / jabra.com

Combining personalised coaching with TrackFit motion sensing tech (and of course your own banging workout playlist) make these in-ears the perfect partner to help you get through that tenth sit up.


PlayStation 4

 US\$400 / playstation.com

There's never been a better time to jump on board the PS4 bandwagon thanks to a massive library of games going into the new year including corks such as Star Wars: Battlefront and Fallout 4.


Seek Thermal Compact Imager

 US\$250 / thermal.com

This add-on for your iPhone will literally let you see in the dark. It renders infrared energy collecting from anything giving off heat (read: basically everything) and creates a visible measurement of it on your device.


Samsung Gear S2

 US\$300 / samsung.com

Samsung's refreshing take on the smartwatch lies in its clever rotating bezel that you utilises to navigate around a proprietary Tizen OS. A good third option for those looking outside Apple and Google.


LG Music Flow HS4

 US\$270 / lg.com

LG's Music Flow range of speakers gives you multiroom audio and the H4 is a great way to get started. You can pair multiples of this 20W Bluetooth speaker across your apartment and have music playing in all corners of your home.


Lenovo VIBE Shot

 US\$300 / lenovo.com

A 5in 1080p, Snapdragon 615-sporting smartphone-camera hybrid, the Vibe Shot comes fitted with a 16MP rear camera with a six-piece modular lens and tri-colour LED flash.



Best of the wrist?

The second wave of smartwatches from the big names in tech has arrived. But which of these is the real Apple Watch challenger?

Moto 360 (2015)

US\$300 / motorola.com

What's the story?

The best-looking smartwatch from the first Android Wear wave is back with an even more legit, watchlike design. There are two sizes as well: 42mm for everyone, 46mm for those with tree-trunk arms. It's classic Android Wear; this is one of the most stylish smartwatches around.

Is it any good?

The look matters a lot with a Moto 360, and the smart design is matched with top-notch comfort thanks to a supple leather strap. If you're after a full-fat smartwatch that looks like a watch, there are few better choices. This is mostly about the slick casing, though. Like the first 360, this watch's screen has an unfortunate cut-out at the bottom, so it's not perfectly round.

It's also one of just a few top-end smartwatches to use an LCD. Although this jacks up the brightness automatically when you go out, visibility on a nice day isn't too hot. And as LCDs can't match the efficiency of OLEDs, you'll only get one day of battery life if you want the display on all the time. It has a neat wireless charger, but the constant recharges get old quickly.

What the Moto 360 has over the S2, though, is the Android Wear assurance that new apps are coming out all the time. The system may still feel like a work in progress but it supports way more apps. This just about makes it the better device.

Tech 1.37in 360x325 IPS LCD ● 11.4mm thick ● 4GB storage ● Android Wear ● Wi-Fi, NFC, Bluetooth 4.1 ● 300mAh battery

Stuff says ★★☆☆☆

This is a beauty among smartwatches, but the battery life and screen fail to impress.

Samsung Gear S2

US\$300 / samsung.com

What's the story?

Out to bust the finger-twisting confusion of other smartwatches, the Samsung Gear S2 has a rotating bezel that acts as your main control. It also breaks free from the Android Wear norm with Samsung's own Tizen OS software. This is a smartwatch that's altogether different from the rest.

Is it any good?

A big step up from the odd-looking Gear S, the S2 is almost a match for the Moto 360 on looks. The rubbery strap isn't quite as comfy, but a smart stainless steel front and not-too-huge size make this a watch you'll want to wear. Its rotating bezel feels great and, well, it just works.

You use it to turn through the menus, all of which are designed for the twisty dial (there are still buttons and a touchscreen, though). Coming from Samsung, it's no surprise the screen is good. It's OLED, 1.2in across and 360x360 pixels: not quite as sharp as some phones, but as sharp as the best watches. Using efficient OLED lets you leave the display on and still get at least 1.5 days per charge. It's not the week-long stamina we want, but it beats both the Moto 360 and the Apple Watch.

The issue with the Gear S2 is that it just doesn't have many apps. Samsung says there are 1000+, but 95% of them seem to be watch faces. You're paying a lot of cash for limited scope here.

Tech 1.2in 360x360 Super AMOLED ● 11.4mm thick ● 4GB storage ● Tizen OS ● Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 4.0 ● 250mAh battery

Stuff says ★★☆☆☆

The bezel control is ace, but be sure you're OK with limited apps before you splash out.

TIZEN OS vs ANDROID WEAR

Samsung has redesigned the Tizen watch OS for 2015, with a circular design that slots in perfectly with the S2's round face and bezel control. It's visually intuitive, more so than Wear, which seems to love making you flick and tap the screen twice as much as is necessary.

The problem is that Tizen is only used by Samsung, and only in a couple of watches so far at that. So, no surprise, it has just a fraction of the apps of Android Wear. Want Runkeeper, Tripadvisor, maybe even some watch games? No problem for Wear. But Tizen? Good luck.

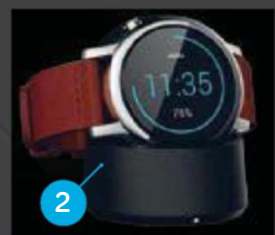


1 Give us a ring

The metal bezel around the screen turns, clicking lightly every few millimetres. It's a great way to flick through Tizen's menus, and is basically a smartwatch stress toy.

2 Pressing matters

There are also familiar buttons on the side: one takes you right to the clock face, the other just acts as a back button. Although it's more fun to muck about with that bezel.



1 Taking the pulse

Both of these watches have heart-rate sensors on the back. They're about the same quality: great when you're not moving, useless for recording your heart rate while you run.

2 Bedside manners

The Moto 360's wireless charger is a cute little seat you can just rest it in overnight to top up its energy reserves. The S2 has a similarly handy little throne for recharging.

App:roved

FOR
NERVOUS
NOODLERS

● Pause

It'd be easy to pour scorn on Pause. This noodly app has you slowly dragging your finger about your iPhone's screen, tracking a pulsating blob, while listening to a tinkly ambient soundtrack. It's like someone's squashed a lava lamp into your device. And yet, in enforcing a calming focus, Pause subverts the typical ten-minute break where you add to your stress by checking ALL OF THE THINGS. Billed as drawing on Tai Chi, it smacks of placebo — but works.

Stuff says ★★★★★
US\$0.99 / iPhone

FOR
SPEED
FREAKS

● HoPiKo

HoPiKo could bring on a nervous breakdown, so relentlessly demanding is this speedrun platformer. You swipe and tap your way through tiny levels, trying to obliterate a virus and save the world of gaming. Your reactions are stretched to the limit, every move requiring precise aim, leaving little room for error. It's intense and frustrating, but any cruelty is outweighed by the constant rollercoaster ride and occasional dizzying thrill when you nail a perfect run.

Stuff says ★★★★★
US\$1.99 / Android, iOS

FOR
GOOD
LISTENERS

● Just Press Record

It's always fun to see a developer out-Apple Apple. With Just Press Record, you get the most elegant recording app for Mac, iPhone, iPad or Apple Watch. Prod 'record', make your recording, and if you're online it will sync to iCloud. Recordings can be renamed and shared — and that's it. The app's simplicity is a boon in situations where you don't want to think and just need to get on with recording something, especially if you're using the Watch.

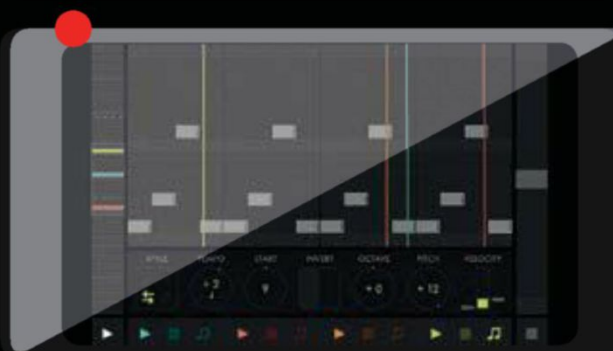
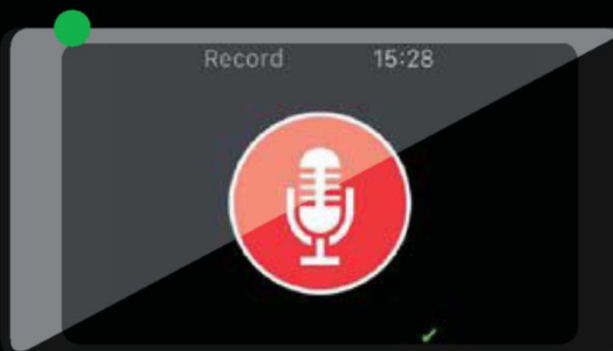
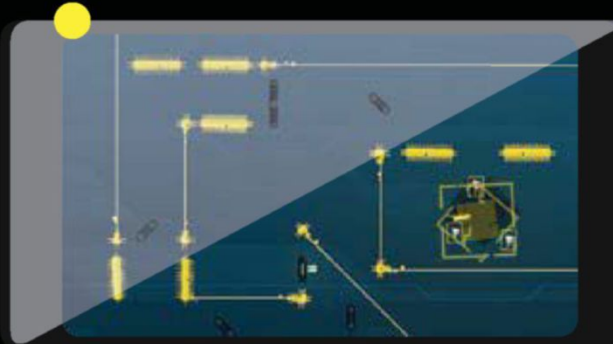
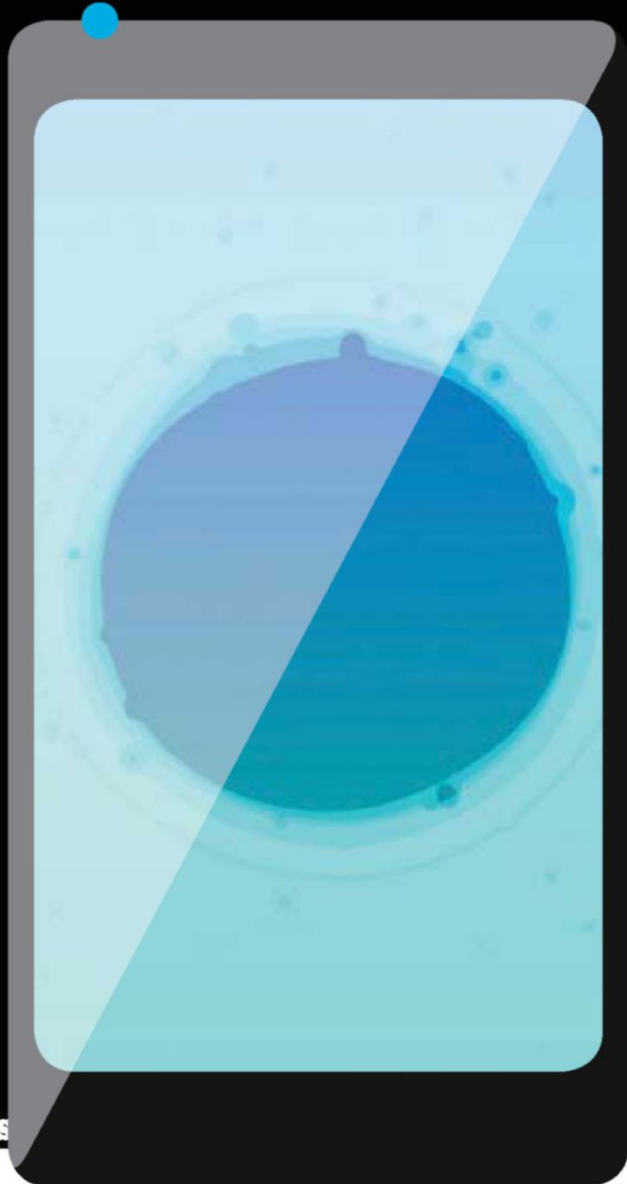
Stuff says ★★★★★
US\$2.99 / iOS

FOR
DIGITAL
MAESTROS

● Fugue Machine

Calling itself 'Bach in a box', Fugue Machine is inspired by layered classical composition techniques, but this is thoroughly modern iPad software. You tap out notes on a piano roll and decide how the four playheads should approach them in terms of speed, direction and pitch. Complex patterns emerge from simple sequences, and it's near-impossible to create something that isn't mesmerising. This app is for anyone, though pros will enjoy the integration with other iPad synths.

Stuff says ★★★★★
US\$7.99 / iPad

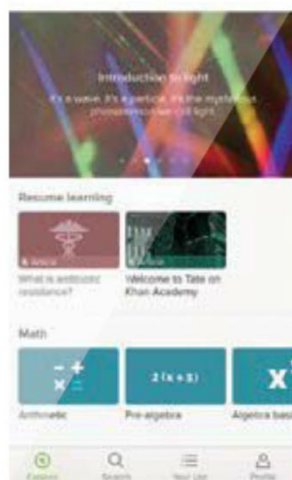


Mini meme



YOU MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING

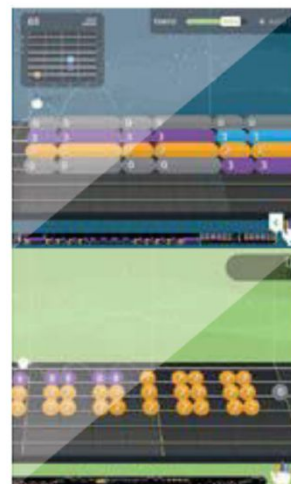
They said winter was coming. We didn't listen. Now it's dark and cold, and we're stuck inside. Well, what better time to pick up some handy skills?



● Khan Academy

With the laudable goal of providing "free, world-class education for anyone", Khan Academy is packed full of videos covering a range of subjects. Videos can be stored offline, and you can create a profile to track progress. The app's a touch US-orientated, but it's still a great tool if you fancy learning something new.

Stuff says ★★★★★
US\$free / Android, iOS



● Yousician

Mastering an instrument can be hard, which is why many people instead 'play' tiny plastic guitars with a bunch of colourful buttons. Yousician flips *Guitar Hero 90°*, and along with your device's mic it gamifies learning chords and notes on a proper guitar. This is way more fun than trudging through rubbish paper songbooks.

Stuff says ★★★★★
from US\$free / Android, iOS



● Duolingo

If you've ever wanted to learn another language but never thought you could spare the time, download Duolingo. Its bite-sized exercises fit into gaps in your day that you'd otherwise waste on Facebook and Candy Crush, taking you from the absolute basics through to conversing like a native. Anyone seen the pen of my aunt?

Stuff says ★★★★★
US\$free / Android, iOS



● Lrn

We're often told coding's the future, but to newcomers it can be like trying to read a book in Ancient Mesopotamian. Lrn provides a way in, taking you through the basics of JavaScript or Ruby, then gradually increasing in complexity as your confidence builds. You get four sets of exercises for free; grab the lot for US\$2.99.

Stuff says ★★★★★
from US\$free / iOS (Android soon)



● Instructables

This app is what happens when teaching goes social. Explore and you can discover how to create wooden trebuchets, Twinkie mummies and all kinds of hacked-together tech weirdness. You can drill down into specific categories, upload your own 'instructable', or just marvel at the mix of creativity and madness.

Stuff says ★★★★★
US\$free / Android, iOS



● TED

The TED mission is all about spreading great ideas in the form of short, powerful talks. The app therefore resembles a brainfood YouTube, where you simply sit, watch and get inspired. Our favourite bit is the 'Surprise Me' tab, which serves videos based on a keyword — funny, ingenious, courageous, etc — and the time you have to spare.

Stuff says ★★★★★
US\$free / Android, iOS

Media hoard

This month we watch Edward Snowden's favourite TV show, hear the best band to come from a town called Bowling Green, and don't play some old video games

WATCH

Mr Robot

_Amazon Prime Instant Video

The odds were stacked against *Mr Robot* being one of the year's most bingeworthy TV shows. Not only is its lead character a taciturn cybersecurity expert, but it's about hackers – and we all know that means bespectacled nerds trying to 'hack the mainframe' against a countdown clock.

The fact that *Mr Robot* resists a 'computers for dummies' approach is just one of the reasons why it succeeds. It's also visually striking and unpredictable, and offers a new take on cyberpunk while wearing its influences (*The Matrix*, *Fight Club* and *American Psycho*) as proudly as the badge on its title character's shirt.

An office drone by day, Elliott Alderson (played brilliantly by Rami

Malek) is also a morphine-addled vigilante who hacks the lives of everyone he meets. That is until he's lured in by *Mr Robot* (Christian Slater) to join the hacktivist group 'fsociety', whose plan is to cancel world debt by attacking ubiquitous conglomerate E Corp.

Cue a trip down a rabbit hole that twists through Lynchian dreams, episode-long musings about the hackability of human brains, and a mounting sense of paranoia that leaves you deeply suspicious of everything down to Elliott's malfunctioning radiator. Edward Snowden is apparently a big fan, but you don't have to be an exiled privacy activist to enjoy it.

Mark Wilson

STUFF SAYS ★★★★★



Ant-Man

_cinema, DVD, VOD

No one thought *Ant-Man* was going to be much cop. Then Edgar Wright dropped out of directing Marvel's latest jamboree and that seemingly sealed its fate. As it turned out, the reliably winsome Paul Rudd, a slew of hearty laughs and some creative action sequences make this the year's best superhero movie.

Rob Leedham

STUFF SAYS ★★★★★



Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation

_Blu-ray, DVD, VOD

Disappointed by *Spectre*? Tom Cruise has taken the opportunity to out-stunt Bond, recklessly clinging to planes during take-off and tearing up the streets of Marrakech on a motorbike. Not bad for a short bloke in his 50s. *Rogue Nation*'s spectacle partially makes up for its cartoonish plot.

Tom Wiggins

STUFF SAYS ★★★☆☆

LISTEN

READ

CAGE THE ELEPHANT

TELL ME I'M PRETTY



Tell Me I'm Pretty

_Cage The Elephant

For a band from a town called Bowling Green in Kentucky, there's something curiously British about Cage The Elephant — even with Dan Auerbach of Black Keys fame twiddling the knobs on their fourth record.

There's very little on *Tell Me I'm Pretty* that doesn't sound like an impression of any number of Brit bands from the '60s: the Stones, Kinks and Beatles are all

referenced, albeit not explicitly, almost to the point where you'd think you were listening to a tribute album.

The problem is, Cage The Elephant aren't the Stones, Kinks or Beatles and it all ends up sounding like an Apple ad. It's well crafted, radio-friendly rock, but all too easily forgotten.

Tom Wiggins

STUFF SAYS ★★★☆☆



Live

Matt Berry And The Maypoles

Toast, Beef, Reynholm Jnr in *The IT Crowd*, Sanchez in *Darkplace*... for all of these reasons it is quite rightly illegal to say anything bad about Matt Berry. Even if he does a poo in your front garden. Berry also makes non-comedic music, of a strangely old-fashioned and theatrical kind, and this is his new live album. We'd better leave it there.

Richard Purvis

STUFF SAYS ★★★☆☆



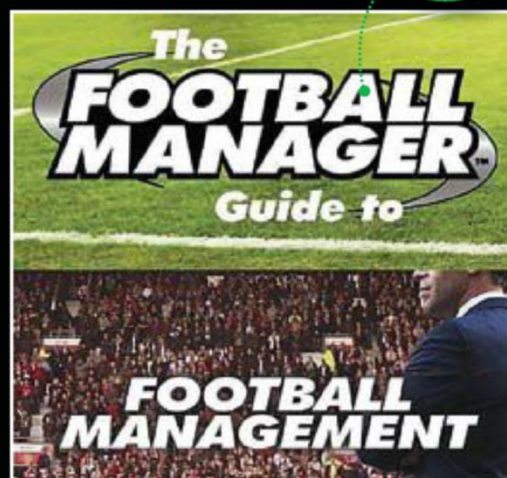
Purple

Baroness

Continuing with the colour theme of their previous album names, Baroness unsurprisingly don't deviate too much from their existing sound. It's punchier, sludgier, stonier, hookier and metallier than the previous double album *Yellow & Green* and the shorter runtime delivers a more compact and engaging headbang.

Ross Presly

STUFF SAYS ★★★★★



The Football Manager Guide To Football Management

_Iain Macintosh

Iain Macintosh has pretty much managed to turn playing *Football Manager* into a day job, which makes him the envy of laptop Kloppes across the world, but he also knows a fair bit about the real thing.

This isn't a manual (the tactical stuff is quite basic and there are only a few pages at the back that relate directly to the game),

but instead Macca uses his years as a footy journo to create a witty, insightful collection of dressing room anecdotes, training ground secrets and lessons to be learned from the real-life gaffers. As he's a Southend fan, it's obviously not just about the Premier League.

Tom Wiggins

STUFF SAYS ★★★★★



Britsoft: An Oral History

_ed. Alex Wiltshire

This spectacularly geeky collection of interviews with the key players in the British gaming industry of the '70s, '80s and early '90s is essentially 400 pages of screening notes for the 2014 documentary *From Bedrooms To Billions*. The clever structure allows you to follow individual people's scattered inputs.

Tom Wiggins

STUFF SAYS ★★★☆☆



Terrible Old Games You've Probably Never Heard Of

_Stuart Ashen

'YouTube star writes book' is becoming a puzzlingly common occurrence. Ashen's tome is the kind of thing you'll read on the loo, although his army of fans are surely more likely to be watching him on their phones.

Tom Wiggins

STUFF SAYS ★★★☆☆

Double No-Trouble

Two screens. Two selfie cameras.
Too much of a gimmick?

US\$680 / lg.com

■ The first thing you notice when unpacking the V10 is that LG have not skimped on its design. A stainless steel frame runs either side of its 5.7in Quad HD main panel giving it heft and a true sense of weight. A textured, plastic back means it's adequately grippy.

■ We say 'main panel' because atop of the aforementioned display sits another 2.1in IPS screen. When the phone is locked it functions as a simple date, time and notification centre, but when on it presents a number of handy functions from easily accessing favourite contacts or displaying upcoming calendar info. Sure, it's gimmicky but put to good use and it proved to be indispensable.

■ The V10 also boasts some pretty impressive specs, similar to LG's G4 flagship. There's a Snapdragon 808 processor under the hood and a zippy 4GB of RAM that kept the phone virtually lag-free. The version we tested had 64GB of storage which can be expanded up via a microSD slot.

■ The 16MP back snapper offers full manual controls and the ability to shoot 4K footage. On the front however, sits a pair of dual 5MP cameras, with one used for standard selfies and the other activated for group shots. A clever software algorithm merges the results together into one seamless photo with a massive 120-degree viewing angle.

Techspecs

Screen 5.7in 1440x2560 IPS LCD, 2.1in 160x1040 IPS LCD **Processor** 1.44GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 808 quad-core, 1.82GHz Cortex-A57 Adreno 418 dual-core **OS** Android 5.1.1 **Cameras** 16MP rear, 5MP Duo front **Battery** 3000mAh **Storage** 64GB (+ up to 2TB microSD) **RAM** 4GB **Dimensions** 160x80x9mm, 192g



■ Button Pushing

As with LG's other phones, the lock and volume buttons are positioned comfortably on the back of the device. The lock button also incorporates a fingerprint sensor bringing the phone up to speed with the likes of Samsung and Apple.

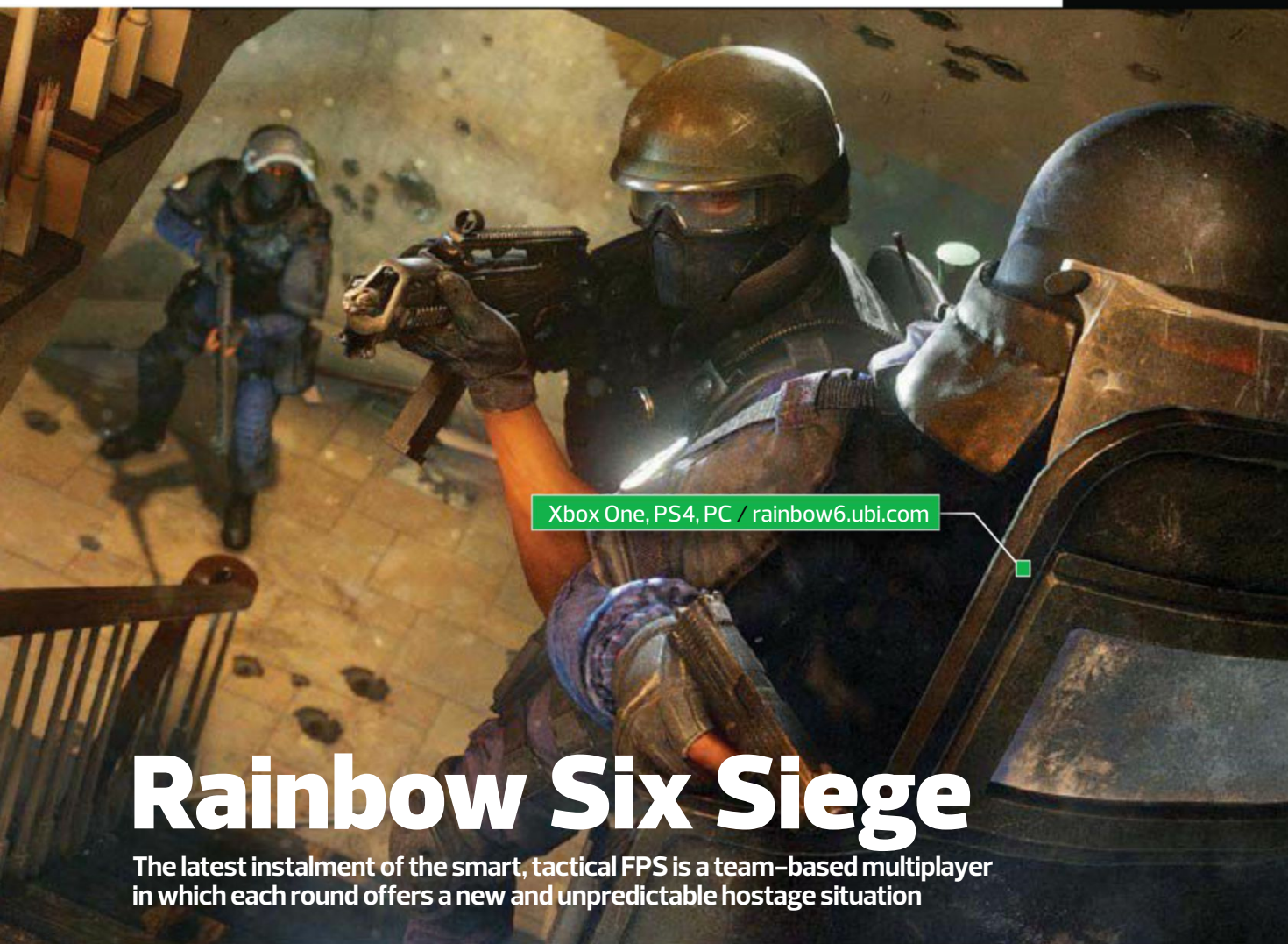
■ Special Effects

The V10 also is packed to the gills with easy-to-use manual video-recording bells and whistles. There are a ton of settings you can get into if you're seeking the perfect video shoot, including things like white balance, ISO, and even bitrate.

STUFF SAYS A strong debut for LG's V series justifying itself alongside the G4 ★★★★★☆

A premium device chock full of multimedia offerings
Mike Priest

Although the V10 is not quite a perfect ten – it let the side down in the battery department compared to similar handsets – it's still a pretty darn good phone and an admirable effort by LG to bring something new to this predictably boring clone phone market. Keep doing you, LG. Stay strange.



Xbox One, PS4, PC / rainbow6.ubi.com

Rainbow Six Siege

The latest instalment of the smart, tactical FPS is a team-based multiplayer in which each round offers a new and unpredictable hostage situation

The *Rainbow Six* series has always been about planning and tactics, and the tenth game in the series allows none of the wall-running and gunning you can do in *Destiny*. In *R6S*, any Leeroy Jenkins behaviour will get you mown down. This is a game about patient inching into position before a few moments of explosive brutality.

It's also about making sure your teammates are preparing, too: like *Counter-Strike*, this cops-v-terrorists team multiplayer game (there's no single-player campaign) is played in rounds, and you win by saving the hostage, defusing the bomb or wiping out the enemy. With 11 maps the variation comes from the way your team and your opponents behave, although every location (from a snowy safe house to a parked 747) is full of choke points, trapdoors and barricades.

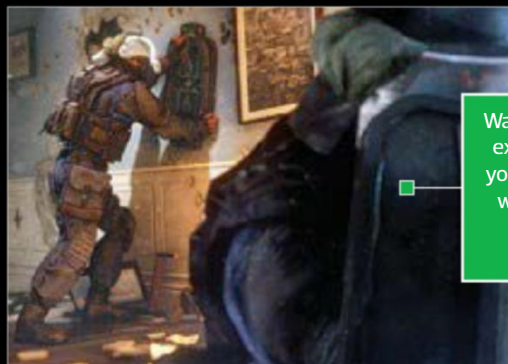
Most matches end up playing out the same way. The cops get into position while the terrorists hastily concoct their defences, and then everyone gets down to

redecorating the surroundings in various shades of fire and blood. Accomplishing anything useful earns you 'Renown', which you can use to unlock more groups of characters and upgrade their gear. Personal favourites include Mute, who come with signal jammers, and Fuze, who can send bombs through walls.

The alternative online mode is recurring fan fave Terrorist Hunt. This is essentially the same game but with more AI, giving things more of a co-operative feel.

Online play is smooth and solid (apart from a slight stutter when turning at speed), and when you launch a coordinated pincer attack or make a heroic last stand, *R6S* is a visceral, clever and hugely satisfying game. It adds some interesting new points, while at the same time stripping back the unnecessary extras that can make its competitors feel bloated. There's no fat, no single-player campaign, and no mercy. With more maps and weapons, this could be a short game that lasts a very long time.

Danny Wadeson



Wall-mountable explosives let you create new windows in a matter of seconds.



Operators come from five units, including the FBI (gung-ho) and SAS (sneaky).

STUFF SAYS Despite its repetition issues, *R6S* is a still a truly unique shooter ★★★★★

SUPER
GEEK

ACTION FIGURES

Toys have moved on since that plastic He-Man you got for your eighth birthday. Collector Peter Brown reveals why it's time to rediscover your love for miniature heroes...

If the '70s and '80s were the golden years for action figures, today is the platinum age. There are now toys for almost every film, video game and TV show, aimed at all ages. And when you get to the big leagues (in particular, Hot Toys) the detail is astounding – metals and plastics, lights and sounds, and beautiful, lifelike sculpts. Hot Toys even recently previewed a 1/6th-scale figure of comic book legend Stan Lee to watch over the rest of your collection.

My addiction started when I was a poorly child in hospital

having my tonsils out. My parents got me a Transformer (Sideswipe, a red Autobot Lamborghini Countach LP500S) to keep me busy. The robot transformation was simple enough for seven-year-old me to change him from robot to car and back again. From there I moved on to He-Man figures with spring-action bodies and A-Team figures, while lusting after the M.A.S.K. Boulder Hill play set.

Action figure collectors tend to be one of three types: investors, casual collectors or nostalgia lovers. A few years ago I tried

collecting for investment and found out how hard it is – you have to be single-minded, prepared to pay a premium for rare figures and happy to travel great distances to attend toy fairs 'just in case'. I'm now more of a 'casual nostalgia' hybrid – if I'm at a boot fair or on eBay and see something cool, I'll give it a punt, but I won't pay over the odds. A rare Palitoy Boba Fett recently sold for US\$26,800 at auction, a record for a Star Wars figure. That's ridiculous.

There's an emerging market for custom-built and modified

figures. 'Kit-bashing' has always been popular in model-making circles, and now it's joined the action figure scene. You'll pay more for a customised figure, but pick the right artist and it'll be worth the investment.

My best advice for beginners is to start small – find a subject you enjoy and run with that. If you love a figure, buy two: one for storage and one to open. That way your collection stays clean, but you get to decorate the area next to your TV with posed battles between Aliens, Predators and superheroes.

JARGON
BUSTER

MIMB

Stands for 'mint in mint box'. A factory-fresh (usually vintage) figure that's still in its original box, in perfect condition, with no dog-eared, tears or sun-bleaching. See also MOMC, or mint on mint card.

BNIB

'Brand new in box'. The same quality standard as MIMB, but used in relation to more modern toys.

LOOSE

The figure has been removed from the box or card. Do some research, and check if any original accessories are included. Expect the joints to be floppy, and paint to be chewed off.

POINTS OF
ARTICULATION

These are the joints of a figure. If you're interested in realistic posing, the more the merrier. Be aware that over time joints will loosen and the figure won't be able to stand on its own as easily as when it was new.

TV STAR
MADE
IMMORTALDELUXE ACTION FIGURE:
RICK GRIMES

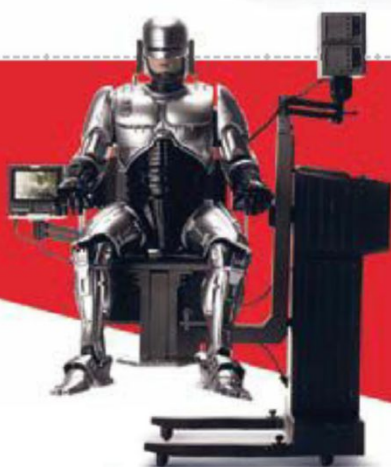
This 10in McFarlane Toys figure is one of the latest from TV zombie-fest *The Walking Dead*. It's a simple figure, with only a few points of articulation at the wrist and elbows, but comes with a pistol, shotgun and knife. It's also based on a 3D scan of Andrew Lincoln (who plays Rick Grimes in the show) and the paintwork makes for a very lifelike replica. The advantage over multi-articulated figures is that it won't ever sag, making it a great display piece. Figures from *The Walking Dead* should have long-term collectable appeal, aided by the recent spin-off *Fear Of The Walking Dead*.

US\$35 / amazon.com

BIG
IN
JAPANHASBRO TRANSFORMERS
20TH ANNIVERSARY
OPTIMUS PRIME

If you were a *Transformers* fan in the '80s, you probably had an annoying friend who was bought an amazing Optimus Prime figure. This version harks back to that G1 original, but adds scale and complexity. The transformation is fiddly (keep the instructions handy) and, unlike the original, it doesn't come with a trailer. But the European version is a perennial eBay find, with mint examples going for several hundred dollars already. The rarer Japanese version has über-cool sharp-sprung smokestack extensions, which add to its collectability.

from US\$200 / ebay.com



ROBOCOP WITH MECHANICAL CHAIR

You'd buy that for a dollar? Sadly, Sideshow Collectibles is charging a lot more. This 1/6th-size set recreates Detroit's deliverer, and his mechanical chair, in incredible detail. There are regular and battle-damaged helmets, four mouth variants, a plastic and diecast metal gun, and so many hands that we lost count. The articulation is beautiful, so you can pose RoboCop standing next to, or sitting in, the chair to recreate your favourite scenes. If kept in good condition (or if you have the willpower to never open it), it may increase massively in value over the years.

US\$300 / forbiddenplanet.com

BOX
FRESH
KEEPER

LEVEL UP WITH...



THE WEBSITE **ACTION FIGURE INSIDER**

Created by two collectors who have been nerding out about action figures since the '70s, this site combines daily news and an active forum with boards on everything from toy conventions to insider rumours. Its 'Toy Library' is also home to reviews of pretty much every action figure from the last decade.

actionfigureinsider.com



THE BOOK **STAR WARS: THE ULTIMATE ACTION FIGURE COLLECTION** (STEPHEN SANSWEET)

More nostalgic guided tour than encyclopaedic reference, this 350-pager examines the 2500 Star Wars figures released over the past 35 years. The author is the owner of the world's largest Star Wars collection, housed at a storehouse called Rancho Obi-Wan.

US\$20 / amazon.com



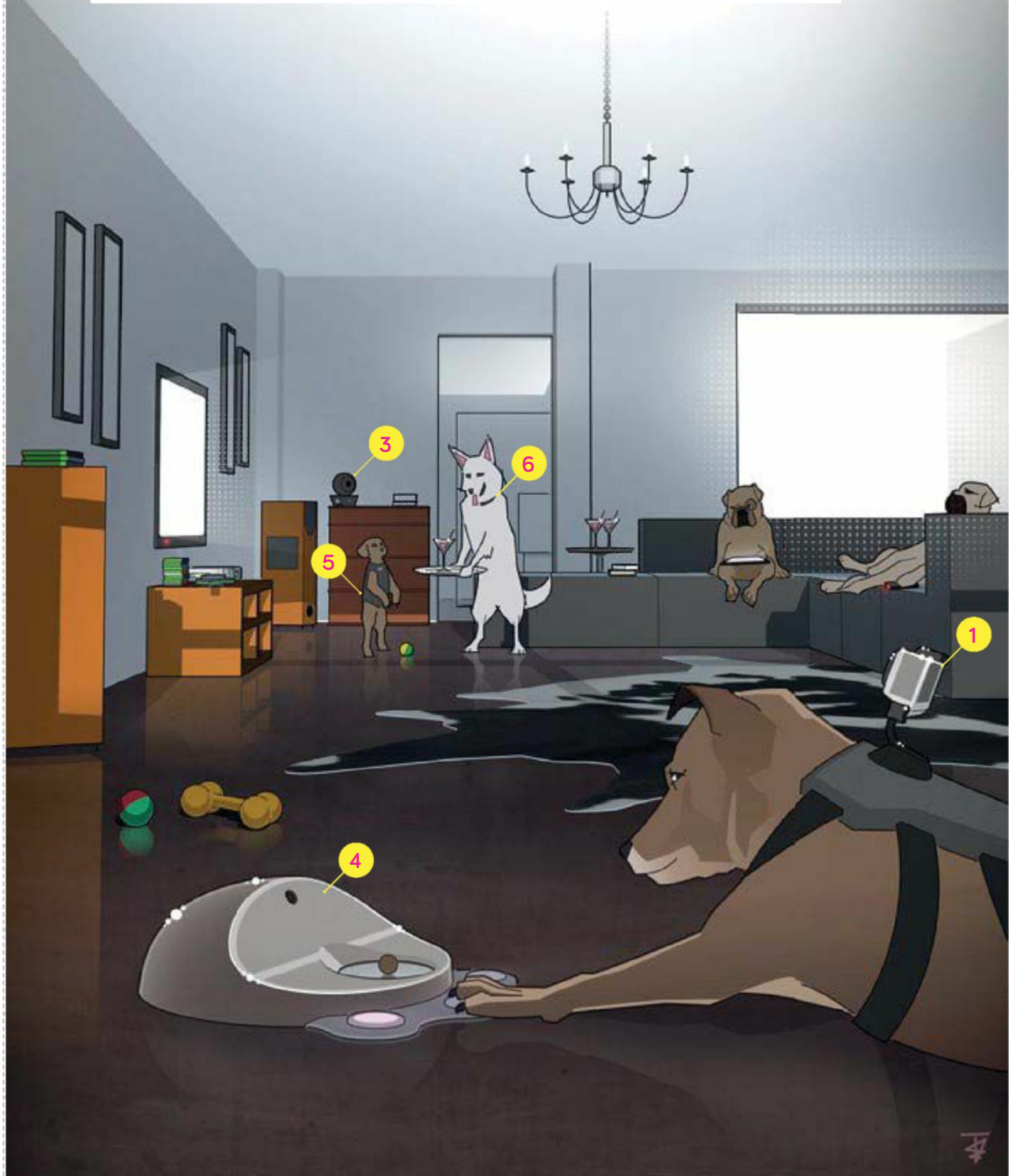
THE YOUTUBE CHANNEL **ANTHONYSCUSTOMS**

When sizing up a figure, it always helps to get the thoughts of someone who makes them for a living. Every Monday this channel, created by a builder of high-end customs, posts a new unboxing, review or tour of a DIY custom or sculpting job. If you want to see where the hobby's rabbit hole leads, subscribe to this YouTube channel.

6 INSTANT UPGRADES

DOG TECH

Owning a dog isn't all fur and games, but these dog-cessories will make your beloved hound's tail even waggier and your life a whole lot easier



[Words: Verity Burns Illustration: Jamie Sneddon]



1 GOPRO FETCH

If you've ever wondered what the world looks like to your dog, try this – the results are strangely addictive. The GoPro Fetch harness allows you to mount your GoPro (or any cam with a compatible mount) onto your pup in two locations: the chest, for flowerbed-digging, bone-chewing, front-paw action; and the back, for those over-the-head shots of ball-chasing and field-bounding. Padded for comfort and completely washable, it's fully adjustable to fit dogs of all sizes between 7kg and 54kg. **US\$70 / gopro.com**



2 IFETCH

Playing ball with your dog is all well and good for the first 20 minutes, but if you're having a slobbery thing dropped in your lap from morning 'til night, you're going to need a break. The iFetch automatic ball thrower is the perfect gadget for fetch fiends – simply choose your range (10ft, 20ft or 30ft), drop one of the included balls in the chute and let the iFetch do all the armwork for you. If your dog learns to load it up too, though, your role as chief thrower could fast become redundant.

from US\$115 / shop.goifetch.com



3 MOTOROLA SCOUT 85 WI-FI HD MONITOR

You can't be around Dogtalian all the time, but you can keep an eye on him via this RSPCA-approved petcam. It packs a motorised pan, tilt and digital zoom function that gives you a 300° view of your pooch, all controllable from your iOS or Android device. There's infrared night vision, a two-way audio communication feature for doggy chatting, and notifications when noise or movement is detected. You can even set it up for motion-triggered recording to view the highlights later.

US\$150 / amazon.com



4 CLEVERPET

It might not have next-gen graphics, but this canine console could be your dog's equivalent of *Fallout 4*. Designed by a group of neuroscience PhDs, the CleverPet automatically rewards your mutt with treats for solving simple light-based puzzles. The game gets trickier as your dog improves, while you view their progress from afar in the CleverPet app. If that all sounds a bit like pet toy overkill, Nina Ottosson's brain-busting puzzles (from €8, nina-ottosson.com) are a fine analogue alternative. **US\$45 / getcleverpet.com**



5 THUNDERSHIRT

If your dog scarpers at the first sign of thunder, turns into a shivering wreck come Bonfire Night, hates car travel or suffers with any other form of anxiety, the Thundershirt promises to combat fearful and nervous behaviour without the need for pills. With a claimed success rate of over 80%, the Thundershirt is a snug-fitting jacket that acts in a similar way to swaddling a baby, applying constant gentle pressure to the body to give your dog a sense of security. Research backs up its effectiveness, and vets and dog trainers alike recommend it.

US\$40 / petsathome.com



6 KIPPY GPS TRACKER

If your dog is a known escape artist, or you just want peace of mind should you ever get separated, this GPS tracker will calm your nerves. Kippy is a small, lightweight device that attaches onto a collar and allows you to track where your pet is at all times using an iOS, Android or Windows Phone device. It uses both GPS and mobile phone mast triangulation to locate your dog should he/she go rogue and provides directions to get there quickly. You can also set up a geofence around your home for notifications as soon as the beast gets out.

US\$200 / petsathome.com

BARK LIFE: DIGITAL CANINE SERVICES



BORROWMYDOGGY

This shareconomy success story sees dog owners and dog lovers come together for a mutually beneficial purpose – 'borrowers' get to spend time with a dog they couldn't have full-time, while owners get someone to look after their pet when they're out.

borrowmydoggy.com



PAWSQUAD

For late night worries or when you can't get your dog to the vet, this service lets owners talk to an RCVS-qualified vet face to face via video link. You'll get a 20-minute consultation for your fee, and Pawsquad reckons it can advise on most cases that you'd usually go to the vet for.

£15 (20 minutes) / pawsquad.co.uk



WALKIES

Like a Nike+ for dogs, this app can track every single walk you and your canine buddy make together, recording your route, average speed and calories burned. If you're looking for dog walk inspiration, it also shows recommended routes in your area and serves up useful facts for impressing fellow walkers you'll meet.

US\$free / iOS



5-MINUTE HACKS

IF NOTHING ELSE, AT LEAST...



1 UNLOCK YOUR CANON DSLR'S POTENTIAL

If you want to open your Canon camera's eyes to a whole new world of software features (and don't mind potentially invalidating its warranty), give this free firmware add-on a spin:

Install the software. Go to magiclantern.fm and find your Canon model. Now download the files and copy them onto a blank memory card you've just formatted in your camera.

Find the lantern. Put the card into your camera and run the firmware update to install Magic Lantern. Restart it, then press the delete button to access the ML menus with dozens of new options.

Get tweaking. Our favourite features include Magic Zoom, which provides a magnified preview of your video subject to help you keep it in focus, and the intervalometer for setting up timelapses without the need for extra hardware.

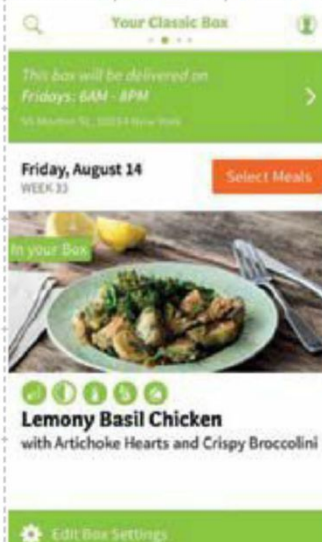
2 GET BETTER TAKEAWAYS

Getting food delivered directly to your rumbling stomach has never been easier, but quality can still be hit and miss. Boost your chances of a tasty takeaway with these tricks:

Inspect their kitchens. The Chrome extension MunchDB ([US\\$free,chrome.google.com](http://US$free,chrome.google.com)) overlays official hygiene ratings from the Food Standards Agency on listings from Just Eat and HungryHouse, rating them from nauseating to fantastic.

Broaden your search. Foodonlick ([US\\$free,iOS](http://US$free,iOS)) offers takeaways from restaurants such as your local Italian that don't otherwise do deliveries. It usually only charges an extra few bucks on top of standard menu prices.

Cook it yourself. If you'd rather get the ingredients for a healthy meal delivered directly to your wok, HelloFresh ([US\\$free,iOS](http://US$free,iOS)) sends boxes for a week's worth of meals along with recipes that take under 30 minutes.



3 GET A ROBOT SECRETARY

Tired of endless back-and-forth chats about times for meetings? One of these automated calendar-comparing geniuses will organise it all for you:

For Slack, go to meekan.com and follow the instructions in the Slack Robot tab. Once set up, you can ask the Meekan robot to compare your team's calendars and suggest times that suit everyone. As long as everyone's calendar is up to date, of course.

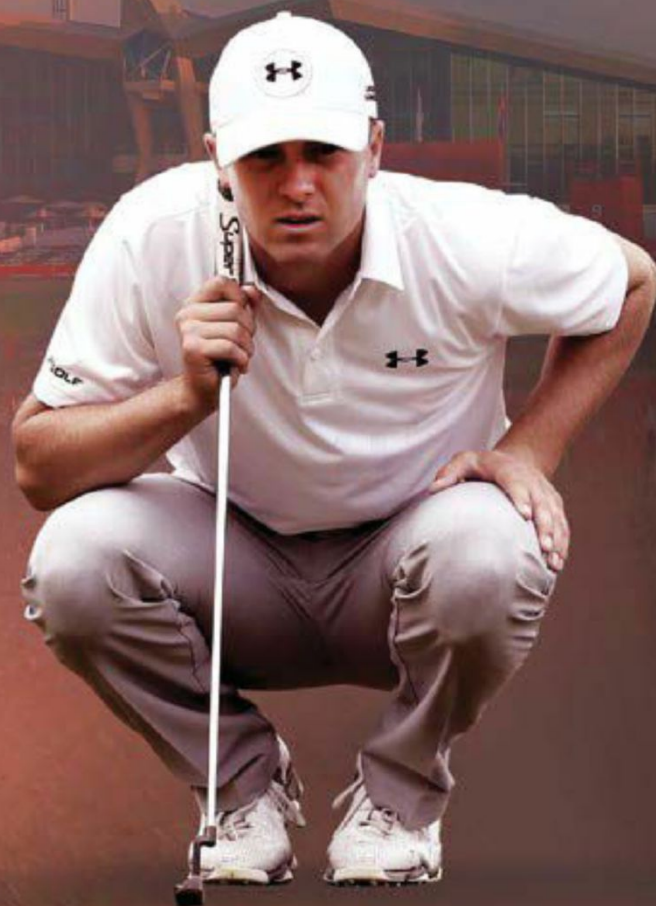
For Google Calendar, Clara (from [US\\$50/month,claralabs.com](http://US$50/month,claralabs.com)) is a more advanced automated assistant who can be CC'd into emails to help organise your work and social life. She currently only works in Google Calendar, but Outlook is in the works.

For everything, Genee ([US\\$free,web.genee.me](http://US$free,web.genee.me)) avoids platform compatibility issues by sending your invitees an email and asking them to pick a time that suits. You can speak to Genee via email, text, Twitter or its iOS app.

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HOT BUY 1		Samsung Galaxy S6 This is a new era for Samsung, with a smart upgrade that fixes not just things that were amiss in the Galaxy S5, but things that have plagued them for years. No plastic here: its front and back are super-tough Gorilla Glass 4, its sides aluminium. In terms of ergonomics and speaker quality, HTC still wins, but only just. And in the more important areas of camera performance, screen tech and raw power, the Galaxy S6 tramples its rival. We just wish it had a microSD slot.	STUFF SAYS Samsung has proven its critics wrong – the Galaxy S6 is the new benchmark for flagship phones from US\$700 ★★★★★
2		Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge+ The Edge+ is a larger version of the curvy S6 Edge that wowed us earlier this year; its extra chunk of screen and camera are terrific, while it's also technologically superior to almost everything out there. For a money-no-object phone, it's an absolute corker.	from US\$820 ★★★★★ BEST FOR CUTTING-EDGE GADGETEERS
3		LG G4 The leather-clad LG G4 is a treat for those who want something that looks and feels a bit different. Its camera is incredibly powerful, giving you almost as much control as a DSLR, and the large screen is brilliant... but the battery life holds it back from the top.	US\$760 ★★★★★
4		Apple iPhone 6s "Everything's changed" is pushing it, but within the 6s's familiar body lies a surprising amount of innovation. You'll really notice the A9 processor's added speed, the 12MP camera's scope and quality, and of course, the time-saving delight that is 3D Touch.	from US\$650 ★★★★★
5		OnePlus 2 The second OnePlus phone massively undercuts the big names with performance, software and battery life that far exceed some of the \$600-odd competition. The only thing that might put you off is simply how much of a pain the OnePlus 2 is to get hold of.	from US\$570 ★★★★★
6		HTC One M9+ Having been beaten by the S6, the M9+ is the step forward that perhaps the M9 should have been. With a bigger, more pixel-packed screen and a fingerprint scanner it's welcome at the next-gen superphone party, and it's dressed just as smartly as before.	US\$710 ★★★★★
NEW 7		OnePlus X A super-value phone that sets a new standard among sub-\$300 mobiles. Its design and performance are sound, with no sign of 'cheapness'. The only real issue is that the OnePlus 2 only costs a bit more – with a more versatile camera and realistic colours.	US\$250 ★★★★★
8		Sony Xperia Z5 Dual Do a higher-megapixel camera and neat fingerprint scanner revitalise this Sony? Nearly but not quite. This is a very good and attractive phone, but its price seems steep when it has no killer feature to offer over other Android kings.	US\$680 ★★★★★☆
NEW 9		Sony Xperia Z5 Compact This snatches the 'small phone, big specs' baton from the Z3 Compact with ease. It has an updated processor and apes the Z5's battery life. The fingerprint scanner is great, but a sluggish camera and only 720p screen mean it has plenty of cheaper competition.	US\$630 ★★★★★☆
NEW 10		BlackBerry Priv BlackBerry's first Android handset stands out from every other current smartphone thanks to its unique design and physical keyboard. It's a capable powerhouse, and the shortcut functionality alone should be enough to tempt avid multitaskers.	US\$700 ★★★★★☆

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to The Global Fund to fight AIDS

HOT BUY 1		Apple iPad Air 2 The iPad Air didn't really need to be thinner, but that doesn't mean 6.1mm isn't mighty impressive. This combines with reassuring weight and impeccable build quality to make this the most desirable tab on the planet. While the display is the same Retina resolution as before, clever screen tech brings the pixels closer to the surface, and the whole experience is even faster than before thanks to the new A8X chip. Basically it's the best tablet in the world made even better.	STUFF SAYS Thinner, lighter and mightier: Apple's iron-fisted reign at the top of the tablet charts continues unabated from US\$500 ★★★★★
2		Apple iPad Mini 4 This is the mini tab we've been waiting for. It's 1.4mm thinner and 32g lighter, just the right size for a great portable entertainment hub, and subtle display tweaks will do justice to games and graphic novels alike. Plus it will easily last three days on a charge.	from US\$400 ★★★★★
3		Sony Xperia Z4 Tablet Sony have added a keyboard to this already stunning tab, so now it's handy for work as well as play, just like a Windows hybrid. Superb battery life, plenty of power, a slim body and super-vivid screen make this the best Android alternative to an iPad Air 2.	from US\$700 ★★★★★
4		Samsung Galaxy Tab S2 9.7 Slimmer and faster, with a brilliant screen and serious stamina, the Galaxy Tab S2 sees Samsung back in the running for the Android throne. The Xperia Z4 just pips it with its bundled keyboard, but the S2's a versatile, big-screen tab first and foremost.	US\$495 ★★★★★ BEST FOR MAGAZINES AND MOVIES
5		Microsoft Surface Pro 3 At last, Microsoft has delivered on the promise of the tablet-cum-laptop hybrid. It proves there's space in the world for a design that's more productive than an iPad or Galaxy Note, but easier to hump around than a traditional laptop.	from US\$800 ★★★★★ BEST FOR USING ANYWHERE
6		Asus Transformer Book T100 Chi While it may sit in the middle of 10in hybrid range on price, the Transformer Book T100 Chi is classier than the average tablet. Improvements to design, screen and keyboard quality make it a neat choice if you don't mind working with a small screen.	US\$400 ★★★★★
7		Google Nexus 9 The design isn't as pristine, but this is a real Android contender to rival the iPads. You get the new Android 5.0 Lollipop software, bags of power and a super-sharp display. With 12 hours of video play and two front-facing speakers, it'll be a great film buddy.	US\$400 ★★★★★
NEW 8		Apple iPad Pro Apple's tablet colossus, the supercharged iPad Pro, is for serious creatives with deep pockets: the perfect digital coffee-table book that just about doubles as a laptop. To make best use of all that screen, remember to also buy a Smart Keyboard and Pencil.	US\$700 ★★★★★☆ BEST FOR ARTISTIC TYPES
9		Microsoft Surface 3 Microsoft finally nailed the hybrid formula with the Surface Pro 3, and now it's translated it to this: a smart, ultra-portable design with the benefits of full Windows 8.1. It's easily the best affordable Surface yet. Just make sure you buy the keyboard.	US\$480 ★★★★★☆
10		Nvidia Shield Tablet This really is the ultimate gaming tablet. The Shield's sheer power and gaming smarts are incredible, with a console-quality controller and the option of seamless streaming from your PC. All it needs now is more made-for-Shield games...lots more.	US\$300 ★★★★★☆ BEST FOR GAMING ON THE GO

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CandyShell Clear
for iPhone 6s/6 &
iPhone 6s Plus/6 Plus

HOT BUY 1		LG 65EG960T We knew that one day OLED and 4K would be joined in matrimony, and that the results would be rather special. That day is now upon us and 'special' doesn't quite do it justice. The 65in LG is the new pinnacle of TV tech and performance, combining the unbelievable colours, contrast and brightness of OLED with the super-sharp, ultra-detailed images of 4K to create a picture that's more real and enticing than looking out of the window.	STUFF SAYS It's might pricey, but if you're after the finest flatscreen known to man, this is currently it. US\$13,600 ★★★★★
2		LG 55EC930T Not everyone's got \$13,000 to blow on a flatscreen, and if you have to choose between OLED and 4K it's OLED we'd take right now. The awesome colours, super-deep blacks and amazing contrast will make everything you already watch look extra-amazing.	US\$2,900 ★★★★★
3		Samsung UE65JU7000 If you're going to go 4K, best do it big. Samsung's latest 65in Ultra HD offering is a beauty with the screen on or off, and the open-source Tizen UI is very snazzy. The processor and inputs are still in a separate little unit than can be upgraded in the future.	US\$4,300 ★★★★★
4		Samsung UE55JS8000 Each of its 8.3million pixels is put to good use, filling the screen's handsome real estate with pin-sharp outlines, potent contrast and eye-popping colours. Sound-wise, it's way more powerful than bog-standard flatscreens. Worth the pretty penny? Oh yes.	US\$4,100 ★★★★★
5		Sony KDL-50W800B 4K a bit too new-fangled (or pricey) for you? How about a 50in edge-lit LED LCD with all of Sony's smart features for well under a grand? It's not even like picture quality's been sacrificed – this is an absolute corker of a telly in every way.	US\$700 ★★★★★ BEST FOR AFFORDABLE BRILLIANCE
6		LG 55UF950T This telly comes to life in a flash, and menus don't waste time loading – it's a glossy double-page advert for pixel-packing 4K technology. The punchy palette revels in dazzling hues, deep blacks and Essex-smile whites, and the sound is solid.	US\$1,900 ★★★★★☆
7		Sony KDL-32W700B There's nothing wrong with sticking with a smaller TV, but you should still make sure you pick a good 'un. This 32in Sony is the best, in terms of both picture performance and features, which include 1080p resolution and all the smart stuff you can handle.	US\$450 ★★★★★☆ BEST FOR A SMALLER SCREEN
8		Sony KD-55X8500B If you want to jump on the 4K bandwagon with Sony you could go for the wedge-shaped X9, which is great, but we'd suggest that this slimmer, less intrusive 'entry-level' 55-incher is an even better buy. It's still got all the smart stuff and great performance.	US\$2,000 ★★★★★☆
9		LG 55LA860W From its super-slim, near bezel-less design to its excellent picture and clever, app-stuffed smart TV hub, the 860W does many things right. Then again, it costs two grand, so it damn well should do. If you've got deep pockets, you could do a lot worse.	US\$3,000 ★★★★★☆
10		Bang & Olufsen BeoVision 11 Five grand for a 40in TV might seem a trifle steep, but if that's small change to you the BeoVision 11 is a luxurious delight of design and 1080p picture quality. It also sounds better than any TV we've ever used, and has a built-in surround processor for adding 5.1.	US\$5,000 ★★★★★☆

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HOT
BUY

1



Sonos multiroom system

Who needs to drill holes and re-plaster walls to get a multiroom music system? Not you. With Sonos, you can expand your set-up at your leisure – why not start with a budget Play:3, and add a bigger Play:5 later? Then maybe hook up a Connect to your existing hi-fi and router, then add speakers to a Connect:Amp in another room, or a SUB for a bass boost. You'll run out of rooms before you run out of options. For a further upgrade, the Arcam rSeries SonLink DAC works a treat with the Connect.

STUFF SAYS

Infinite music in every room without the need for custom installers? Sign us up now, please

from US\$750 ★★★★★

2



Naim Mu-so

US\$1,400 for a wireless speaker?! Well yes, but what a wireless speaker it is. Naim has ploughed all of its high-end hi-fi experience into delivering a beautifully made, great-sounding device with AirPlay, Spotify Connect and aptX Bluetooth all on-board.

US\$1,400

★★★★★

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3



Monitor Audio Airstream S200

It may look a bit like a floppy skyscraper, but the Monitor Audio's Bluetooth-plus-AirPlay speaker makes a lot of sense, mostly because it takes up very little shelf/desk/table space but makes loads of lovely noise. It's a bit of a steal at £200.

US\$300

★★★★★

4



Cambridge Audio Go

There are loads of very cheap Bluetooth speakers out there, but we reckon it's worth spending that little bit more to get something that's really good – and that's the Go. It sounds awesome, it's really nicely built and its battery lasts a massive 18 hours.

US\$180

★★★★★

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5



Bluesound multiroom System

Fancy a bit of Sonos-style multiroom but with better-than-CD-quality sound thrown in? You want a Bluesound. There are all-in-one speakers, adapters for your existing hi-fi, and a Vault that rips and stores all your CDs. All can handle high-resolution audio.

from
US\$620

★★★★★

6



Libratone Zipp

A fuzzy, cylindrical, colourful Airplay dock that will deliver detailed, punchy 360-degree sound anywhere at all, thanks to a built-in battery that gives it four hours of outdoors life. Direct Wi-Fi skills free you from cables, routers, and everything but the boogie.

US\$505

★★★★★

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AL FRESCO
PARTIES

7



Philips Fidelio E5

Setting up a 5.1 home theatre can be a daunting task. Figuring which speakers to pair with which receiver and laying down metres of unsightly cable. This wireless setup from Philips takes the mess out of surround sound, stripping out the clutter.

US\$780

★★★★★

8



Audio Pro Addon T10

Available in orange, white or black, the Addon T10 is a Bluetooth speaker that also has analogue inputs and a USB socket for charging your MP3 player. Sound-wise it's punchy and deep, with just a little too much bass. It sounds best in orange, obviously.

US\$420

★★★★★

9



Beats Pill

Beats transformed the headphone market, and now they're at it again with portable hi-fi. The Beats Pill impresses with simple controls, slender stylings and solid build. It goes impressively loud for its size, minus the booming base of its headphone counterparts.

US\$200

★★★★☆

BEST FOR
BLASTING
TUNES ON
THE GO

10



Sony NWZ-ZX1

The latest Walkman is a premium high-res audio player, and it's the best-sounding portable device we've ever heard: you'll notice parts of songs you never knew were there. We're not so keen on the high price and lack of expandable storage, though.

US\$920

★★★★☆

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HOT BUY 1		Apple MacBook Pro 13in (2015) Apple hasn't changed too many parts of the MacBook Pro for 2015. There's a fancy new trackpad and the latest generation of Intel CPUs, which deliver better stamina as well as a chunk more power. This is an incremental upgrade, but given how good the Pro already was, that's more than enough to keep it right at the top of the laptop honours list. If you need power as well as stamina and portability, this is one of the best laptops money can buy.	STUFF SAYS If it ain't broke... it hasn't radically changed, but the Pro's performance and trackpad are top of its class from US\$1,300 ★★★★★
2		Asus ZenBook UX305 Asus knows what it's doing. It knows that the Apple MacBook Air laptops are treading water and the ZenBook UX305 is pretty much everything the 2015 Air should have been, with its fetching aluminium design and as good a display as any US\$1000 laptop.	from US\$1,100 ★★★★★
3		Microsoft Surface Pro 3 At last, Microsoft has delivered on the promise of the tablet-cum-laptop hybrid. It proves there's space in the world for a design that's more productive than an iPad or Galaxy Note, but easier to hump around than a traditional laptop.	from US\$930 (with Type Cover) ★★★★★ BEST FOR USING ANYWHERE
4		Alienware 17 A brute of a machine in every way, the Alienware 17 weighs as much as four MacBook Airs and probably frags harder than 10 of them. Core i7 Haswell processor at 3.4GHz, Nvidia GeForce graphics, up to 32GB of RAM... Our trigger finger's already itching.	from US\$2,150 ★★★★★ BEST FOR SERIOUS GAMERS
5		Apple MacBook (2015) This is no 'Air', nor 'Pro': a clear sign that this is what Apple sees as the future of the ultraportable laptop. And it's certainly very desirable: a 12in lean machine with a superb screen and haptic touchpad. However, the lack of ports can be frustrating.	from US\$1,300 ★★★★★
6		Lenovo Yoga Pro 3 The third entry in the Yoga Pro line refines the laptop/tablet hybrid design with a power-sipping new Intel Core M processor plus slimness and style to make even the MacBook Air look worried. And you can stand it up like a tent. If you want.	US\$1,900 ★★★★★☆
7		Apple MacBook Air 13in (2015) Apple is scraping by with pretty much the same Air design as before. You get a new processor, new connectors and slightly improved battery life, but still no Retina screen. However, if a portable road warrior is what you're after, this is still a great choice.	from US\$1,000 ★★★★★☆
8		Dell XPS 13 Dell's 2015 refresh to its XPS 13 Ultrabook is a revelation. It's practically bezel-less thanks to a 13.3in edge-to-edge "infinity" display that doubles 3200x1800 high resolution touchscreen. We're also totally smitten by the precision trackpad.	US\$1,600 ★★★★★☆
9		Acer Aspire Switch 10 With a 10.1in HD 1280x800 screen, Intel Atom innards, eight hours of battery and compact form factor, this flexible hybrid is for anyone who dreams of MacBook they can pull apart. Excellent for both writing your next novel or watching cat videos on YouTube.	US\$410 ★★★★★☆
10		HP Envy 6 Sleekbook AMD Trinity processors power this Ultrabook alternative, making it cheaper and more battery-filled. The Envy 6 has a quality metal lid and rubberised base, 15.6in screen, and its 6GB RAM gives the 500GB hard drive faster boot times than a similar Intel core i3.	US\$660 ★★★★★☆

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HOT BUY 1		AKG K451 They've actually been around a little while now, but what put the K451 on-ears back on to our radar was an official price drop from US\$220 to US\$130, and a real-world price of just US\$100. For that money they're unbeatable – awesomely agile and punchy sound wrapped up in a subtly stylish and foldable design. Add both standard and three-button control cables for maximising compatibility and there's practically no excuse for not getting brilliant sound.	STUFF SAYS Fantastic sound and great portability at an almost unbeatable price: the perfect PMP upgrade US\$100 ★★★★★	
2		Philips Fidelio M1 MkII Your commute deserves a quality soundtrack, and second-generation Fidelio M1 headphones give you precisely that. There's oodles of detail to the sound and they punch harder than the Hulk. Beats and their ilk can't touch them.	US\$280 ★★★★★	
3		SoundMagic E10S This is actually the third version of SoundMagic's awesome, affordable in-ears – not that you'd tell by looking. They sound even better, though: a little smoother and more refined, with tight, weighty bass. Plus there's now a mic and button for smartphone use.	US\$40 ★★★★★	
4		Sony MDR-EX650AP If you're prepared to pay a little extra for your in-ears, these Sonys are even better than the SoundMagics above. The sound is that bit bigger, a little more detailed and a little more grown-up, and if you don't like the brass finish there's a silver version.	US\$90 ★★★★★	
5		Bose QuietComfort 25 The best kind of silence is the kind you then fill with sweet, sweet music, and that's what the QuietComfort 25s give you. The active noise-cancelling quells office hubbub, air-conditioning and aeroplane hum, and delivers cracking sound in its place.	US\$260 ★★★★★	BEST FOR SHUTTING OUT THE WORLD
6		Sol Republic Master Tracks Really tough things are usually really ugly, which is why the lovely styling of the "virtually indestructible" Master Tracks headphones is so refreshing. Loud, punchy, fast and controlled, the sound is just as attractive as the design. Worth every penny.	US\$200 ★★★★★	
7		Bowers & Wilkins P3 Superb sound and a very solid and achingly stylish design make these the best portable on-ears around. The fact that two cables come in the box – one with a mic and remote for iPhones and one without – only sweetens the already candy floss-like deal.	US\$270 ★★★★★	BEST FOR ON-EAR EXCELLENCE
8		Sennheiser Momentum Black Already known as the on-ears for the dapper man about town, Sennheiser has given its Momentum cans a cool new black and red paintjob. The specs stay the same; expect comfortable cushions and smooth-sounding audio.	US\$440 ★★★★☆	BEST FOR QUALITY AND STYLE IN ONE
9		Beats Studio (2013) The original Beats noise-cancellers have been given a refresh, ditching the AAA batteries and getting a cosmetic overhaul. You can expect all the bass Dre's cans are known for and a lot more punchy detail than the old ones. The foldy earcups make them great for travel.	US\$300 ★★★★☆	BEST FOR BASE, BUCKETS OF IT
10		Sennheiser CX 680i Light, sweat-resistant and with a clever 'EarFin' to keep them in place, the CX 680i in-ears are the perfect partner for sporty music lovers. They sound impressive, too, and have an in-line mic. Try the PMX 680is (US\$50) if you'd prefer a neckband design.	US\$75 ★★★★☆	BEST FOR TUNE-LOVING FITNESS FANS

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- 30-Foot Wireless Range, and Sounds as Good as Wired
- Angled Tip Points to Your Ear








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SLRs

HOT BUY	1		Olympus OM-D E-M1 The Olympus flagship is armed with the same excellent 16.3MP sensor as its predecessor the E-M5, but has an improved autofocus system, a startlingly good electronic viewfinder and masses of direct controls. Also look out for the E-M10.	US\$1,200 (body only) ★★★★★	
	2		Canon EOS 700D Look, it's a new Canon at No2. No, wait, it's the old one. Actually, it's kind of both. The 700D is a minor upgrade over the 650D, keeping the latter's 18MP sensor, flip-out touchscreen and autofocus during video and adding little beyond a new kit lens. It's still great though.	US\$685 (body only) ★★★★★	BEST FOR ALL-ROUND VALUE
	3		Sony A7R We love this camera. It's light weight but tough and delivers results that outstrip pretty much any other compact system camera on the market. It has a huge full-frame 36.4MP sensor and noise-suppression. Your wallet might weep, but your photo album will sing.	US\$2,300 (body only) ★★★★★	BEST FOR SHOOTING LIKE THE PROS
	4		Nikon D750 It's big and bulky, but otherwise this is one of the most comfortable and intuitive DSLRs money can buy. And with a handy tilt screen and some wireless connectivity features, there's none of the purist snootiness that we saw in the D810.	US\$780 (body only) ★★★★★	
	5		Fujifilm X-T1 There's lots to love about this snapper, from its clever viewfinder and lightning-speed focus to the weatherproof body. One for the analogue lovers, it has actual buttons and dials with no touchscreen. The lack of in-cam image stabilisation is our only complaint.	US\$1,900 (body only) ★★★★★	

COMPACT CAMERAS

HOT BUY	1		Sony DSC-HX60 2014's HX60 isn't a huge departure from its predecessor in terms of its build quality, ease of use, specifications and 30x zoom lens – all of which are excellent. What it does add is NFC and a newer Bionz X processor, making it a slightly nipper performer.	US\$555 ★★★★★	
	2		Fujifilm FinePix X20 The X20 isn't all retro looks and no trousers. It excels in Advanced Auto mode and has manual controls and RAW shooting for creative days. The optical viewfinder, though small, is linked to the 4x zoom and frames well. All this, and it looks damn cool.	US\$460 ★★★★★	
	3		Canon PowerShot S120 Replacing the S110, the S120 is a compact camera for DSLR users on their days off. Its 12.1MP stills, low-light prowess and useful long-exposure modes are welcome, while its slightly laggy lens-ring control and hit-and-miss Wi-Fi features take the shine off.	US\$540 ★★★★★	
	4		Nikon Coolpix AW110 With a metallic body, sturdy locking mechanism and optional camo finish, our new favourite tough cam has got that whole military chic thing nailed. Its army – geddit? – of features include excellent 16MP stills, 1080p@30fps video and glove-friendly controls.	US\$385 ★★★★★	BEST FOR ADVENTUROUS SNAPPERS
	5		Sony DSC-RX100 The 20MP RX100 is just what we're looking for in an advanced compact: pocketable with a huge 1in sensor which serves up great images. After something a bit different? Sony's crazy new lens-without-a-body, the QX100, has much of the same tech.	US\$680 ★★★★★	BEST FOR PORTABLE POWER

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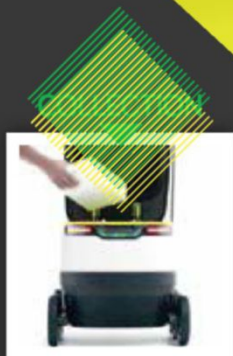
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NEXT BIG THING?



ROBO-CURIERS

Is that a popcorn machine on wheels?

Not quite. It's actually a self-driving robot, and its entire purpose is to safely traverse pavements, potholes and pedestrians, delivering items you've ordered online straight to your front door. Here's how it (might) work: the retailer ships your goodies to a local delivery hub, where it's collected by a cooler box on wheels. You'll then choose a delivery time and track your robot using an app. Think of it as an all-terrain Santa Claus, minus the festive paint job, beard, reindeers... and soul. It can carry roughly two shopping bags' worth

of stuff, and its rechargeable battery means it's good for the environment too.

What happens if it meets a cat?

Well, nothing presumably, minus a curious sniff, and probably a bat of a paw. With a top speed of just 4mph, it's not going to splatter any furry friends it meets along the way. Your cargo will be safe, as no one will be able to open it but the recipient thanks to its inbuilt smart locking system. If a particularly ambitious thief makes off with it, they'll be caught in no time by, we're guessing, drone reinforcements. With lasers.

It seems overly complicated. What's the point?

According to creator Starship, last-mile delivery methods are often the priciest link in the postage chain. Robots like these can help reduce these costs by up to 15 times, while reducing the environmental impact of gas-guzzling delivery vans. Plus, you know, it's a self-driving robot – do you really need any other reason? Starship is planning to launch tests in the UK within the next year. If we can look forward to a future in which freshly made sausages are automatically carted to our house by a miniature tank, then you're not going to hear us complain about it.

[Words: Esat Dedezade]

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